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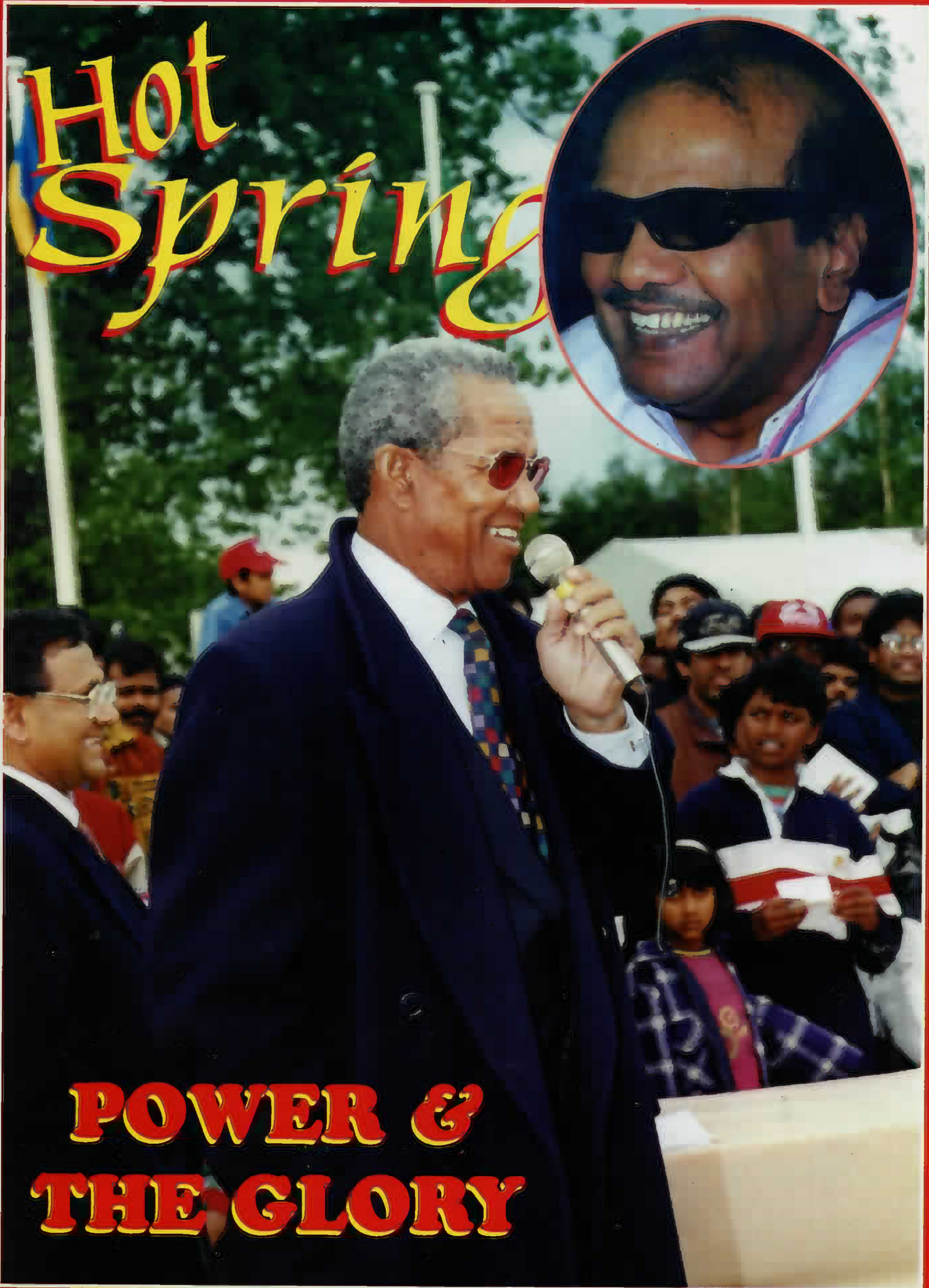
June 1996

# Hot Spring



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Hot Spring
A journal of commitment

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The views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the publishers

# Launch of *HOT SPRING*

HOT SPRING was launched at the Mount Royal Hotel, London on 14th May 1996 in the presence of more than a hundred invitees. Mr.Ivan Pedropillai, Managing Director of Melrose Publications Ltd. chaired the function and Mr.Lawrence Thilakar, Central Committee member of the LTTE and Mrs.Thilakar were present as Chief Guests. Speakers were Mr.C.J.T.Thamotheram, President of the International Tamil Foundation. Mr. Barry Gardener. Labour Party candidate for Brent North, Mr. James Karunaharan, Solicitor S.Sriskandarajah, Miss Mann and the Editor Mr.S.Sivanayagam, Dr.K.Indrakumar was Master of Ceremonies.

Picture shows a section of the participants and audience.

## INSIDE

* What They Say * Sri Lankan govt.killings of Tamil civilians * South African Tamils protest * From the War Front * Northeast Scenario * Military Occupation of Jaffna Peninsula and its implications * What Singapore learnt from Sri Lanka's mistakes * Bergen Conference: A clarification * Chechenia and Sri Lanka * Archbishop Desmond Tutu pleads for Tamil refugees * Washington protests in pictures * MSF man resigns * India: Profile of a Prime Minister * Olympic High Jumper from Jaffna * Tamil Cricket Festival: Report and Pictures

# "WHAT THEY SAY"

## International

*Former assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Rabin's outspoken widow Leah, soon after Israel elected Netanyahu as Prime Minister*

"All I want to do is pack my bags and get out of here".

*Hemi Shalev, a columnist for the newspaper MA'ARIV:*

"Half of the public in Israel is now going round with a feeling that redemption is at hand, and the other believes that it is trapped in a hell on earth".

* * * * *

*What people in Japan whisper, as Crown Prince Naruhito (36) and Princess Nasako (32) approach their third wedding anniversary without a heir:*

"When are they going to produce a son ?". "I bet it's her problem;she was a working woman for a long time", says a middleaged woman. The stress did it".

"Are you kidding?" another asks. "The emperor's brother had no kids either. That side of the family has had baby problems before. It's the prince".

* * * * *

*Russian President Boris Yeltsin who launched a war against Chechean separatists that has left more than 30,000 dead defiant after the latest cease-fire:*

"The war's over, you've defeated the rebels. You've eliminated the bandit groups".

* * * * *

*Jaipal Reddy, spokesman for the new United Front government in India, on pledge to continue much of the economic reform programme launched by former Prime Minister Narasimha Rao:*

"There is little advantage in breaking the continuity... Technocrats are flexible people. They are like horses. Their policies depend on the person who rides them ".

* * * * *

*Burmese Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi when asked how Burmese civilians could prevail against the military junta:*

"That's exactly why there will be change, because all they have is guns"

* * * * *

*Kashmiri farmer, shivering in the rain before voting, tells Tim McCirk of THE INDEPENDENT, London:*

"If the militants find me with the ink on my thumb, they'll kill me. And if I don't vote, the soldiers may beat me up or shoot me dead. I might as well drown myself in my rice paddy".

*The Ven.Dr.Walpola Rahula, Chancellor of the Kelaniya University:*

"It seems that there is no government in this country today.. Everything is in chaos. The persons who should speak are silent and in hiding.

"People are hopelessly desperate. Under these circumstances, anything could happen" (Quoted by the WEEKEND EXPRESS, June 1-2,

* * * * *

*Statement by G.G.Ponnambalam Jr., General Secretary, All Ceylon Tamil Congress at the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Reform of the Constitution:*

"....The ACTC's position today, is that , unless the Tamils can live with the Sinhalese in any part of this island on the basis of absolute equality of opportunity and of rights, nothing less. Regional Councils nor Federalism can be the answer. The only solution can be the separate state of Thamil Eelam".

* * * * *

*Veteran Sinhalese journalist 'Ole Ceetee"writing in the WEEKEND EXPRESS, Colombo of May 19:*

"It is an offence to be a Tamil in Colombo, or to be a Sinhalese married to a Tamil. It is so in the eyes of the police"

* * * * *

*AstrologerPiyasena Ratuvithana on Sri Lanka's surprise decision to adjust its clocks to daylight saving time:*

"We do not accept the new time.We will go by the old time. Otherwise we will have to change all our charts and tables and that is going to lead to a lot of confusion.".

*Quoting him, the SUNDAY OBSERVER says:*

The government made the sudden move to advance the clock from midnight Friday (1830 GMT) "in the light of the present power crisis"- a government statemen said.

## Presidential pronouncement

*An angry President Chandrika Kumaratunge on the strike by the Ceylon Electricity Board workers which plunged the country into darkness for several days:*

"My government cannot allow 14,000 workers in the Ceylon Electricity Board to hold a country of 18 million people to ransom... This is not a legitimate demand of trade unions, but an attempt to dictate policy matters to the government... They are trying to run the government. We know this has been planned over several weeks, because parts of generators were removed and wires cut at the same time on Wednesday. Even the General Hospital generator was broken at the same time, and on Thursday, further parts were removed from the hospital generator by persons who pretended they were there to repair it"

Comment

# THE RETURN OF AN OLD SOLDIER

"Kalaignar" Muthuvel Karunanidhi, who celebrated his 73rd birthday on June 3, returns to power in Tamil Nadu, for the fourth time in 27 years, a rare distinction for any politician in any country. With the South calling the shots in the North for the first time in the history of Indian politics, Karunanidhi himself, from being a regional leader has now emerged as one of the pivotal figures at the Centre.

His come-back with a massive majority signals several new trends in the political landscape that could have implications both for India and Sri Lanka: the end of a dark age in Tamil Nadu; the return to Tamil values and the re-emergence of Dravidian politics; his political clout in Delhi with two DMK Cabinet Ministers and 35 Lok Sabha seats in alliance with the Thamilaha Manila Congress; his new-found political company with the two break-away non-Brahmin Congress stalwarts Moopanar and Chidambaram which could boost his campaign for greater autonomy to Tamil Nadu; and above all, a refreshing change in political attitudes in respect of the Eelam Tamils' issue.

Karunanidhi has been a consistent campaigner in the cause of the Eelam Tamils, both when in power as well as out of power. The first of the mass protests organised by the DMK in protest against killings of Tamils took place nearly 20 years ago. in 1977, in the wake of the anti-Tamil riots of that year. Under the headline: HARTAL ALMOST TOTAL, the *INDIAN EXPRESS* of 25 August, 1977, reported: ".... The one-day hartal called by the DMK to express sympathy for the Tamils in Sri Lanka was almost total in the City. The DMK also took out a huge procession from the Anna statue on Mount Road to the office of the Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka...".

In May 1985. Karunanidhi founded the Tamil Eelam Supporters Organisation (TESO), which had a proven record of agitational success. TESO defined its objectives as:- To help the Tamil partisans to carry on the struggle against State terrorism in Sri Lanka; to help Tamil refugees; and to propagate the demand for Tamil Eelam at the national and at international levels.

Karunanidhi's biggest achievement came one year later, in May 1986. when TESO held its SAVE CEYLON TAMILS CONFERENCE in Madurai. It lifted the concern for Ceylon Tamils from the boundaries of Tamil Nadu into an all-India one, as the impressive list of participants would show: Atul Behari Vajpayee: the late N.T. Rama Rao; then Lok Dal leader and earlier Minister in the Central Government H.N.Bahugana; Akali Dal Secretary from Punjab Balwant Singh Ramoowalia; a leader of Dr.Farook Abdulla's National Conference of Kashmir Abdul Rasheed Kabuli; Karnataka Home Minister S.Rachiah; Muslim League leader Abdul Samad; K.P.Unni Krishna; P.Upendra; P.Nedumaran; V.Gopalasamy; K.Veeramani.... leaders from all parts of India, men with differing approaches in domestic politics, but who gathered together in the heart of Tamil Nadu on Karunanidhi's invitation, on a united bid to express solidarity with the Ceylon Tamils. The closed-door conference was followed the next day by an unprecedented mass rally for which an estimated 3 lakhs of people turned up.

Now, in 1996, it would be unrealistic to expect a politician thrown out of power, not by the will of the people, but by machinations at the Centre, to engage in any dramatics. He has necessarily to be more subdued, more pragmatic. But it could be said with certainty that the interests of the Eelam Tamils would always be safe in the hands of Karunanidhi.

***On the Cover:*** West Indian cricket celebrity of yesteryears, and one of the all-time greats of world cricket. Sir Garfield (Gary) Sobers who was ChiefGuest at the Tamil Cricket festival in London.

# SRI LANKAN WAR ON THE TAMILS

# SRI LANKAN GOVT. KILLINGS OF TAMIL CIVILIANS IN THE NORTH AND EAST APRIL-MAY 1996

*20th April:*

## BOMBING RAIDS BY Kfir SUPERSONIC PLANES

A mother of 3 children from Muhammalai, a village in Thenmaratchi, Ramasamy Aruljayanthy, relates the story of how 2 Sri Lankan Kfir supersonic fighter planes wreaked havoc on her village on the 20th April. Her elderly father, her elder sister and the elder sister's infant child were collected as pieces of flesh after the bombing raid.

Speaking from Vanni where she managed to escape, she said: When we first heard the scream of the jets, we rushed into the underground bomb shelters. Two bombs fell near the bunker and I fainted. When I recovered consciousness, I found the headless body of my father, the shattered body of my elder sister and pieces of my sister's infant child. I raised cries and neighbours joined to dig up the bunker which had filled up with sand. Miraculously, we managed to pull out my three children alive from beneath the earth, but they suffered severe injuries. My sister's other two children. her husband and my little sister aged nine were seriously injured and were admitted to Manthikai hospital in Point Pedro.

*21st April:*

On the next day when we held funeral ceremonies for the dead the planes came again and dropped eight more bombs. My relatives who participated in the funeral were severely burnt. Seven of my relatives were missing, at the time we fled to the Vanni. I am sure they must have been killed. All houses in the area where the bombs fell have been burnt down, she said.

*24th April:*

## WOMAN KILLED BY ARTILLERY SHELL

Soldiers of the Mankindimalai Sri Lankan arrny camp fired artillery and mortar shells on neighbouring Tamil residential areas of Manal Aru on 24th April around 7 p.m. Mrs.Paramsothy Suntharalingam of Ist Cross Street, Semmalai, Mullaitivu was killed, and her son Jegatheeswaran (25) was seriously injured. He was admitted to Kilinochchi hospital. Earlier, on the same day at 10. a.m.the same area was bombed by an Israeli built Kfir plane of the Sri Lankan air force.

*25th April:*

## 3 KILLED INCLUDING A CHILD

Three persons, including a child from a single family were killed when an Israeli built Kfir plane of the Sri Lankan air force bombed Muhamalai area of Thenmaradchi. The victims were: Kathipavelan Muthukumaran (73), his daughter Vasanthy(31) and his grandchild.

The unidentified body of an 8-year old child was recovered from the Jaffna lagoon. The child's body was kept in Kilinochchi for identification, but as no one claimed the child, it was feared that his parents too might have been killed. The dead child was among many people who were killed due to the Sri Lankan army shelling on civilian boats crossing the Jaffna lagoon.

*11th May:*

## TWO BURNT ALIVE IN THEIR HOMES

A rampaging Sri Lankan army patrol unit set fire to Tamil homes in Chenkalady, Thevapuram and Morakoddanchenai in the Batticaloa district. Several houses were completely burnt down. Velupillai, an 80-year old man and Kaneswari Nakan, a 46-year old woman were burnt alive in their homes.

*14th May:*

## 3 KILLED 11 INJURED

Intensive shelling from the Silavathurai army camp on Tamil residential areas in the Mullaitivu district. The worst hit were areas around the villages Thaneerootu and Mulliyavalai. Three civilians were killed and eleven others were seriously wounded. The dead were Mrs.Wigneswary Naguleswaran, a 22-year old mother of two children who was in an advanced stage of pregnancy expecting her third child, Mrs.Muthiah Thissomma (76) and her relative.

*15th May:*

## ONE KILLED, MANY MORE WOUNDED

Two Sri Lankan air force fighter planes flew over the villages of Ambalavan, Pokkanai, Mullivaikal, Valayankadu and Maththalan along the coast of Mullaitivu district and dropped around six bombs in quick succession. Mrs.Sinnamah Vairaiya (45) was killed on the spot. The severely wounded included Nadanasabapathipillai Sivanantham (43), two children, Thavachelvam Nirojani (9) and Kumaraeswary Nathiya (8) and Visvalingam Manmathakumar (16), Thambimuttu Thirupalasingham (47) and his son Sivakumar (17). The dead and wounded were all refugees from the Valikamam district.

On the same day, 15th May, the Sri Lankan navy entered the Kilali sea in darkness around 4 a.m.and tried to attack Tamil refugees who were continuising to flee in boats across the Jaffna lagoon to the Tamil mainland. The Sea Tigers rushed to the scene in their boats and a battle lasted for about two hours, during which all the fleeing refugees were saved, except Kandiah Rukmanithevi a 45-year old woman from Point Pedro who was killed in the Sri Lankan navy fire. Three others were badly injured. The injured were: Thambirasa Ponrasa (26), from Thunnalai South, Karaveddy, P. Ravindran (20) and Kandiah Kandeepan (2O) both from Vasavilan.

K. Kumuthini, the daughter of Kandiah Rukmanithevi who was killed in the Kilali sea told how they were attacked by Sri Lankan naval boats. She said: "We were crossing the lagoon to the safety of the mainland . The boats carrying us and other passengers had completed one hour of journey, and we had one more hour to reach Vanni. At this time, several Sri Lankan naval boats came on the scene and started firing on our boats. My mother was hit directly on the head and several others were injured. My mother died while hugging her children. In a few minutes Sea Tiger patrol boats came to our rescue and fired on the naval boats and forced them to flee. We were later escorted by the Sea Tiger boats to the shores of Vanni".

*16th May:*

## SIX KILLED, ONE FATALLY INJURED

Around 6.30 a.m. two Israeli built fighter jets of the Sri Lankan air force dropped bombs on residential areas of Maruthankerni, which is a village in Vadamaratchi East. One house was completely demolished in the bombing raid. The bombers came back to the scene at about 10.30 a.m. the same morning and dropped their deadly bombs this time on the nearby thickly populated village of Sempianpattu. In this raid, four civilians were killed on the spot and another was fatally injured. The planes arrived over the area for the third time around 12 noon, but this time no bombs were dropped. At 3 p.m. the two planes came back for the fourth time and dropped several bombs killing two civilians and injuring many others. On their way back, the jet fighters circles over Vanni mainland several times causing panic among the civilians.

Apart from these aerial bombings , heavy shelling of the village of Kudathanai in Vadamaradchi and the village of Varani in Thenmaradchi continued that whole day. The shelling came from the Elephant Pass army camp. Casualties were not known.

*17th May :*

## 8 CIVILIANS KILLED IN VANNI MAINLAND

Eight civilians were killed and 16 others were critically injured in two separate bombing raids carried out by the Sri Lankan bomber planes over the Vanni Tamil mainland. In the first raid which took place over Thambirai in Pooneryn, five civilians were killed and eight others, including an old woman were critically injured. The planes had targeted a busy market place. The market building disappeared after the bombing.

Vinasithamby Krishnapillai, a resident of Thambirai, who was at the scene during the raid, said: The bombers flew over the market area at high speed around 10 a.m. when the area was crowded with people. I went unconscious when the bombs hit the place. When I regained consciousness there were clouds of sand particles and dust all over the place. I saw severed heads and limbs strewn around. Many people were buried in the crater created by the bombs and had to be dug out.

Information on the five killed in Thambirai: Soosaipillai Francis (37), father of five children, Thangavelu Ravindran (34) and Kandiah Thevarasa (38), all three killed on the spot.

R.Balachandran (30) and Apputhurai Santhirarasa (35), father of two children died on the way to hospital.

In the second bombing raid which took place about three and a half hours later over Nedunkerni in Mullaitivu, three civilians were killed and eight others seriously wounded. In this raid, carried out at 1.30 p.m.the two Kfir planes dropped their bombs on a crowd of villagers who were waiting to collect water from a public well. The bombs exploded with such powerful force that many people were buried in the earth and had to be dug out alive in a pathetic condition. The injured were warded at a nearby hospital.

# HELP STOP THIS WAR, OR RESIGN, TAMIL M.P.S TOLD

*Eight Eelam Tamil organisations based in the U.S.A have in a letter dated April 21, 1996, sent the following appeal to the Sri Lankan Tamil Parliamentanans, which was censored by the Sri Lankan government.*

"We are horrified by the new and genocidal assault launched by the Government of Sri Lanka in an area of the Jaffna Peninsula crowded with hundreds of thousands of refugees from the earlier military offensive.

The indiscriminate use of heavy artillery and aerial bombardment has already resulted in dozens of civilian deaths and hundreds injured.

We understand that the Killali point is also under Government's artillery and helicopter attack, cutting escape for the hapless civilians.

"Armed forces (one hundred percent Sinhalese) are carrying out military operations in Tamil areas without the presence of any independent witnesses. This is an unacceptable situation and we are horrified by the indecency and the cynicism of the government in putting out macabre reports, under cover of censorship, that no civilians had been killed and that the troops are being welcomed as "liberators".

"As members of Parliament representing the Tamils, you have the sacred duty of protecting them from this genocidal attack. This duty is not negotiable.

"The tragic fact is that your strategy of cooperation with the Government has not benefited the Tamils. The policy of subjugating the Tamil population, started in 1948 continues with intensified ferocity.

"Your votes sustain this Government. In this hour of extreme peril to the Tamil people of Sri Lanka, we beg of you to demand of the Government the war be stopped immediately. Should the Government not act on your demand promptly, we plead with you to resign from the parliament immediately. Only such action could have some deterrent effect on the Government and also expose it's true nature to the rest of the world.

"Every day's delay by you from such action would result in many more innocent Tamils killed and maimed."

*Ilankai Tamil Sangam, USA INC.- N.Jeyalingam, M.D., Tamil Sangam of Southern California - K.Arulanantham, M.D. - Shan K.Sunder, M.D., Eelam Tamil Association of America, MA, USA - Mr. T. Sri Thillaiampalam, Ilankai Tamil Sangam - Florida Chapter Inc., FL,USA - Mr. N. Balasubramaniam, Ilankai Tamil Sangam - Texas, USA - Dr. Philip M. Savundararaj, Tamils of Northern California, CA, USA - Mr. Shan Nandakumar Dr.John Balachandran, Action Group of Tamils of US, NY, USA - R.K.Sriskandarajah, M.D., Tamil Welfare & Human Rights Committee, MD, USA - Mr. M. Sreetharan*

# Member of the European Parliament on "the murderous attacks on Tamils"

PAULINE GREEN, Labour and Co-operative Member of the European Parliament for London North, has in a letter to one of the constituents, says:-

"Thank you for your letter outlining your concerns over the campaign of State terrorism in the Jaffna peninsula, against the Tamils. I very much share your concerns.

"I can tell you that I have met with representatives of the Tamil population in Brussels and Strasbourg and am regularly informed of the up-to-date position by my colleagues who, as Members of the Parliament's Delegation for relations with the countries of South Asia, have visited Sri Lanka and have made sure that all Members of the European Parliamentary Labour party are kept fully aware of current events.

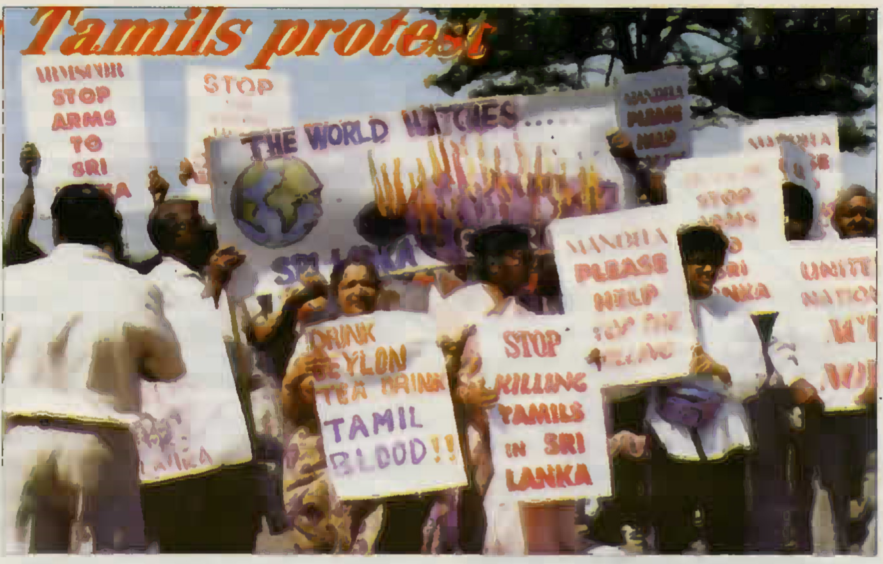
"You have my assurance that I shall support motions and questions which are raised in the European Parliament on this most disturbing human rights issue. I enclose the latest resolution concerning recent events, adopted by the Parliament in November. The resolution calls for all concerned to protect the civilian population in the Jaffna peninsula; calls on the LTTE organisation to refrain from attacking civilian targets in Colombo; and for the government to ensure that the civil rights of the Tamils are respected. I also enclose a copy of a Declaration issued by the Presidency of the European Union in May.

The situation in Sri Lanka has been on our agenda on many occasions over the last seven years that I have been in the Parliament. We have constantly opposed the activities of the Security Services in Sri Lanka against the Tamil Tigers. I have also worked locally with my local Amnesty International and other groups who have been working to end the abuse and the murderous attacks on the Tamils.

I hope it assures you that there are those in the international community who have not forgotten the continuing plight of the Tamils and are actively working for them."

# South African Tamils protest

# Mandela asked to help stop ethnic cleansing in Sri Lanka


STOP ARMS TO SRI LANKA
STOP
THE WORLD WATCHES....
SRI LANKA
MANDELA PLEASE HELP
DRINK CEYLON TEA DRINK TAMIL BLOOD!!
STOP KILLING TAMILS IN SRI LANKA
MANDELA PLEASE HELP STOP THE KILLING
UNITED NATIONS

Over a hundred Tamils living in Chatsworth, South Africa, picketed City Hall in a recent demonstration of the Tamil community's disgust at the ethnic cleansing in distant Sri Lanka, writes News Editor Vivaga Thambirian and Viroshen Chetty in the CHATSWORTH CHRONICLE. The report says:-

The Placard demonstration culminated in the handing over of a memorandum to a senior government official by members of the Tamil Eelam Support Group which was launched two months ago in Chatsworth.

In another dramatic development Mr. Charles N. Pillay, former member of the famous 8th army, has said that he has the support of over 400 Indian men trained in the S. A. Navy who are prepared to die on Sri Lankan soil for the liberation of the Tamils. Mr Pillay is prepared to lead them into battle if necessary.

Deputy speaker of parliament in Kwa Zulu Natal for the ANC, Mr. Willies Mchunu, accepted the memorandum and promised to hand it over to President Nelson Mandela and act on his response.

Mr. Mchunu who was in Sri Lanka recently on an official visit said the ANC believes in fighting violence wherever it rears it's ugly head.

Local chairperson of the Tamil Eelam movement, Mr. K. Chinappan said he is appealing to Mr. Nelson Mandela to convince the President of Sri Lanka, Mrs Chandrika Kumartunga to declare the stae of Thenmaradchy a safe haven for Tamil refugees.

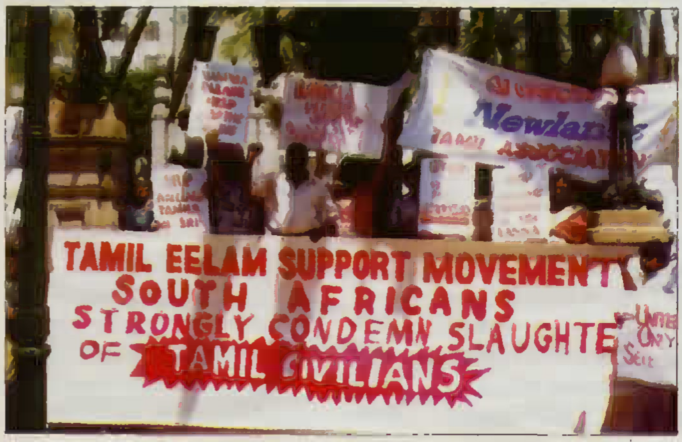
Mr. Chinappan believes that if Mr. Mandela adds his voice to the cry of world leaders, his influence and international standing will help to stop Sri Lanka from becoming another Yugoslavia.

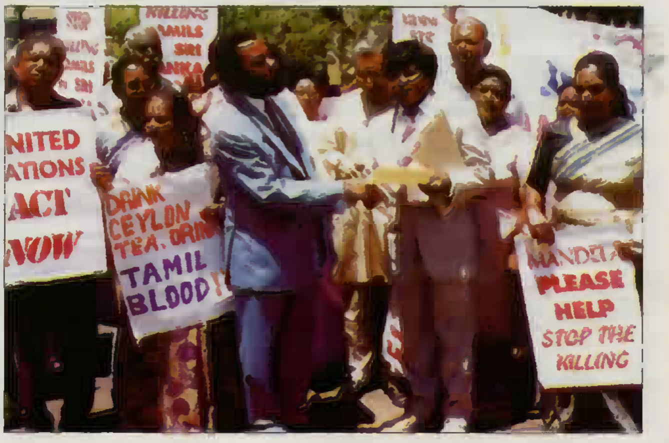
High ranking officials of the Tamil Eelam Support Group allege that Armscor, the manufacturers of South African weapons supplied Sri Lanka with arms and are still selling weapons of war to the beleagured country.

Armscor claims there is a present moratorium on sale of arms to Sri Lanka.

When questioned by the Chronicle about alleged Armscor involvement in the supplies of arms to the Sinhalese government in Sri Lanka, Mr Mchunu said that activities of Armscor are presently being investigated.

He also said that he is aware of the former government's involvement in such activities.


Newlands
TAMIL ASSOCIATION
TAMIL EELAM SUPPORT MOVEMENT
SOUTH AFRICANS
STRONGLY CONDEMN SLAUGHTER
OF TAMIL CIVILIANS


NITED
ATIONS
ACT
NOW
DRINK CEYLON TEA, DRINK TAMIL BLOOD!
MANDELA PLEASE HELP STOP THE KILLING

# From the War Front

## Tigers overrun army camp in Trinco district

On 27th of May at 2.45 am LTTE forces launched an attack on the most hated 'Piccaro' Sri Lankan army camp in Trincomalee district. The camp fell to the LTTE forces in fifteen minutes. More than ten Sri Lankan soldiers including one officer were killed and several others were injured in this successful operation. Arms and ammunitions were recovered by the LTTE forces from the camp. Army units which rushed to the scene for assistance were also attacked by the LTTE forces and one Sri Lankan soldier was killed and four others were injured. 'Piccaro' is a place situated in the central spot on the road connecting Kanthalai and Aruvil in Trincomalee district and the soldiers from this camp are well known for their ruthless atrocities among the Tamil people in Trincomalee district.

**Details of the LTTE fighters who died in this operation :**

2nd Lt. Alexander, Thampithurai, Ramesraj and Sinnakumaran

**Details of the arms and ammunitions recovered :**

*81 Mortar - 01; 81 Mortar scope - 01; 81 Mortar shells -12; 81 Mortar Para shells - 02;*

*60mm Mortar - 01; 60mm Mortar scope - 01; 60mm Mortar shells - 11; 60mm Para shells - 02; 60mm Mortar booster - 3 boxes; AK Magazines - 52; Repeater - 01; PK base plate - 01; Wire roll - 07; IM bullets - 7370; PK bullets - 1186; PK in link; PK drum magazine - 01; PK chin boxes - 04;*

*Solar energy set - 01; RPG -01; RPG shell -27; RPG propeller - 22; AK-LMG - 01;*

*AK-LMG drum magazine - 08; AK-LMG bullets in link - 500; T-81 rifles - 03; T-81 magazines - 05;*

*T-56 rifles - 01; T-56-2 rifles - 01; T-56-1 rifles - 09; Claymore - 03; Mini exploder - 05; hand grenade - 05; AK Holster - 05; Jacket - 02; Kit bags - 24; Military shoes - 11 pairs; Supply Holster - 06; Battery -03;*

## War planes bomb jungles

The Sri Lankan war planes are continuing to fire rockets and drop bombs on the Muthalikulam jungle areas of the Trincomalee district causing a huge environmental disaster.

The bombing which started on Tuesday (21st May), has been continuing without stop. Wild life and large stretches of pristine forests have been destroyed.

## 9 civilians hurt in land mines

Details of 9 civilians who had lost their legs to land mines buried on roadsides and house fronts by Sri Lankan soldiers have come to light. The figures could be much more and the army had not yet cleared the trip bombs and mines they had buried in the various parts of the Jaffna peninsula. Whether they have the time and the inclination to carry out this exercise is a moot question. The land mine is another major hindrance to normal life in the occupied zone.

## 9 Army men killed in North

On Friday, May 24, the LTTE forces launched an attack on Sri Lankan soldiers who were travelling on a trailer which was being pulled by a tractor in Vadamaratchi. 6 Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and many others were injured. On the same day, the LTTE forces launched another attack on Sri Lankan soldiers who were foot marching in the morning at about 11.15 AM from Thunnalai to Kalihai Junction in Vadamaratchi. One Sri Lankan soldier was killed while the rest of the soldiers fled in panic.

On Thursday, May 23, the LTTE forces launched an attack on Sri Lankan armed forces at Mirusuvil in Thenmaratchi. 2 Sri Lankan soldiers were killed.

## 2 Army men killed in Irupalai

On Thursday, May 23, the LTTE forces penerated Irupalai, a maximum security area in Valigamam and staged a sudden attack on the troops stationed there. Two soldiers were killed on the spot and several others were badly injured. On the 26th, the LTTE entered Irupalai again and killed two more soldiers in a similar manner. One T-56 - D2 rifle and its magazine were seized from the enemy forces.

## Air Force and Navy men killed in Jaffna

LTTE forces in Jaffna peninsula continue their operations against the Sri Lankan army which is now occupying most parts of the peninsula. Or the 26th of May two Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and two more severely wounded in two separate operations in Mandan and Nelliady areas o Vadamaratchi division.

Armed forces personnel travellin in a vehicle on the roads of Varathapallai in Vadamarachy, were attacke by the LTTE forces at 11 a.m. on 23r May 1996. One air force and one nav personnel were killed. Killed air forc personnel is identified as Janab D.M Yasar who served in Palali army bas for the last four years. Another ai force officer who was injured in thi attack is now receiving treatment in th Palali army hospital.

## Non-stop shelling around Vettilaikerni

Day before yesterday (10-05-96 the Sri Lankan naval ships shelled th eastern coastal areas of Vadamaratch

## From the War Front

The shelling went on non stop and lasted for almost the whole day. The coastal areas around Vettilaikerni were the worst hit. At the same time, the Sri Lankan soldiers stationed at the Elephant pass army camp fired artillery shells towards the interior of the eastern coast around Vettilaikerni and Kaddaikaddu. The residents of the area abandoned their homes and have fled further to the interior for safety.

### Another army camp destroyed

On the 19th of May, the LTTE forces launched an attack on the Sri Lankan army camp at Thihilakkadavai in the Trincomalee district. The army camp was completely destroyed in the attack which began at about 12.30 AM in the early morning and lasted for only 30 minutes. 9 Sri Lankan soldiers and 7 home guards were killed. Arms and ammunitions were seized and 6 LTTE freedom fighters were martyred in the operation.

The Thihilakkadavai camp in the Trincomalee district was built more than two decades ago by the then Prime Minister Srimavo Bandaranaike to aid in the state sponsored Sinhala colonisation of the Tamil homeland.

### Kent farm army camp falls

During the night on the 18th of May at about 11.45 pm, the LTTE forces launched an attack on the Kent farm army camp that is situated in the Manal Aru area. Within a matter of few minutes the entire army camp fell to the LTTE forces. Arms and ammunitions were seized from the army camp. Casualties on the Sri Lankan army side are not known. Two LTTE fighters were martyred in this operation.

The Kent farm army camp was built more than a decade ago on the scene of a massacre of Tamil village farmers who lived and worked in the Kent farm. The Tamil farmers were driven away and a Sri Lankan army camp was built to spearhead the Sinhala colonisation of the Tamil homeland in Manal Aru.

### LTTE attacks in the peninsula

A Sri Lankan army position at Kodikamam in the military-controlled Peninsula was attacked on Thursday morning (23rd May) at about 7.30 AM. 2 Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and 5 were injured including an officer. On the same day, the LTTE forces also attacked a Sri Lankan army sentry post which was erected at the entrance to the Chavakachcheri Hindu Ladies College.

On Friday (24th May), the LTTE forces resisted a column of Sri Lankan armed forces that was advancing from their camp at Ponnalai during the early morning. The soldiers withdrew after advancing 50 yards from their camp when one of their soldiers was badly injured.

# Heavy spending on new military hardware

***BBC Correspondent Flora Botsford reports from Colombo:-***

As the Sri Lankan government concentrates its attention on the military operation in the north, there are further signs that the economy is suffering as a result of the war effort.

The Central bank's annual report for 1995 said the Sri Lankan economy grew by 5.5. per cent last year - a fraction lower than in 1994, when growth was 5.6 per cent. Although such a growth rate is perfectly acceptable, the Central bank governor, A. S. Jayawardena, says the economy could easily match the high growth of Asian countries such as South Korea and Taiwan, if expenditure on the war in the country's north and east was reduced.

Defence was the single largest item of government expenditure in 1995. It rose to 34 billion rupees (629 million dollars) from the budgetted figure of 24 billion rupees (444 million dollars) after peace talks between the government and the rebel Tamil Tigers broke down last April.

The projected figure for defence spending in 1996 is higher still, at 38 billion rupees (703 million dollars). Some of this budget will be used to support the government's current military operation to capture more territory in the northern Jaffna peninsula. Mr Jayawardena says that if it wasn't for such huge spending on defence, Sri Lanka could easily achieve annual growth of about eight per cent.

Despite a 1994 election pledge to reduce military spending, the People's Alliance government probably considers the high defence expenditure as money well spent.

To achieve this, the Sri Lankan government has been spending on weapons and hardware. Israeli Dvora fast attack craft and supersonic kfir fighter jets are among the new purchases. Infantry fighting vehicles and artillery have been bought from China. New MI-24 helicopter gunships and MI-17 troop carriers from the Ukraine have also been in action during this latest offensive. And an intensive army recruitment drive has meant that there are more than five thousand new soldiers on the pay roll.

Defence sources say the spending on weapons and hardware is unprecedented, running into several hundred million dollars in the past year. President Chandrika Kumaratunga, who promised to bring peace to Sri Lanka after thirteen years of civil war, is now following a military as well as political strategy to end the conflict. And as the Tamil Tigers are no match for a conventional, military assault by land, air and sea, it's arguable that the new equipment was needed to ensure the success of the latest operation.

But the fighting has deterred foreign and local investors in the government's privatisation programme.

# North-East Scenario

## Life of Fear and misery in Jaffna

Within the army occupied areas of the Jaffna peninsula, parents with young girls live in fear of roving bands of Sri Lankan soldiers. A nervous father had locked his gate in the night. One group of soldiers who visited his house during the night ordered him to keep his compound open as there was nothing to fear any more. Another group of soldiers who visited his house later on in the night, harshly interrogated him as to why his compound had remained opened.

The Jaffna hospital within the Army occupied Jaffna peninsula literally functions as a home for the aged. Only elderly people go there while young people do not dare to go to the hospital for treatment. The Sri Lankan soldiers keep a watchful eye on the incoming and out going patients. Only half the normal complement of doctors have reported for work and only a few nurses and hospital attendants are available at the hospital.

There is a severe shortage of food within the Army occupied areas. The Tamil people are made to lose their self respect and dignity by being forced to wait in long queues for long hours and beg for food and other sustenance from the armed forces.

The most revered Nallur Kandasamy Hindu temple in Jaffna is now managed by the Sri Lankan army. The temple is surrounded by army tanks and armoured vehicle when army officers enter the Temple. The pooja is conducted by a single priest only. Only elderly people go to the Temple while the young people are afraid to go to the Temple for prayers.

## Young girl raped by soldiers

On the 5th of May, three Sri Lankan soldiers forcibly took away a young 19 year old girl from her home in Nunavil in the army occupied Thenmaratchi area. She was gang raped by all three soldiers who abducted her and was left unconscious in a bad condition at a secluded spot near her home.

## Punishment for Tamils in Vanni

There is an acute shortage of medicine in the Jeyapuram and Vanneri hospitals in Vanni Tamil mainland where the Sri Lankan Government has imposed restrictions on medical supplies. The people living in the villages of Jeyapuram, Pallavarayankaddu, Kiranchi and Nachchikuda which are served by the two hospitals are badly affected. People suffering from diseases like Malaria, coughs, rashes and itches are not getting any treatment due to the lack of medicines in the hospitals.

## Life under army surveillance

The Tamil people living within the army occupied Valigamam in the Jaffna peninsula are subjected to draconian regulations and special military surveillance. The Sri Lankan armed forces are now issuing different categories of identity cards with different colours to the people living within Valigamam. The people are being divided into different groups by the type of identity card that is being issued to them. One type of identity card is issued for school going children and young persons remaining in the house with their parents. The people who have to travel outside of Valigamam are issued with Green cards, while those remaining within Valigamam are issued with yellow cards.

## Restrictions on movement

The Sri Lankan armed forces who have set up barriers at the entrances to the Jaffna town are permitting only 25 young persons to enter the town in any given day. The young peoples' freedom of movement within the town are also severely curtailed. Further, the refugees who return to their homes are also subjected to lengthy questioning and military interrogations.

## Radio Veritas "outlawed"

The Sri Lankan armed forces have started a campaign of using force to stop the Tamils living in the Eastern province of Sri Lanka from listening to the Tamil service of the popular Radio Veritas which broadcasts from the Philippines. Listeners caught listening to the radio service are beaten up by the Sri Lankan armed forces. Recently, an angry Sri Lankan soldier drove a ball point pen into the ear of a Tamil listener who listened to the radio. Listener's Letters addressed to Radio Veritas are often seized by the armed forces at the post offices. The letter writer is traced and is arrested or punished.

The Tamil service of Radio Veritas is very popular among the Tamils as it broadcasts true stories of what is really happening to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Obviously the Sri Lankan armed forces find this repulsive.

## Detention camps in Jaffna

Sri Lankan army has built large military camps in various parts of the occupied Jaffna peninsula. In one such camp in Kopay, 500 Tamil youths of both sexes are being detained. Another large military complex has been built in Navatkuli. This camp was built on the Navatkuli housing scheme which was created a decade ago to house the homeless people of Jaffna district. 300 houses in this scheme has now been turned into a large military complex. Coconut and Palmyrah trees had been cut down in large numbers to build barricades around this camp.

## School-going youths missing

30 Tamil youths of school going age were arrested in Sarasalai in Thenmaratchi division by the Sri

## North-East Scenario

Lankan army and have been held incommunicado in secret locations. Their parents are going from camp to camp in a desperate search for their missing children.

### Rape attempt on 60 yr. old

On the 13th of May, an armed Sri Lankan soldier entered the home of a a 60 year old Tamil woman living alone in her house in Kalaimagal Lane in Ariyalai within the army occupied Jaffna peninsula and tried to molest her. The woman while struggling to free herself shouted for help. The soldier taken aback, fled leaving behind his AK 47 rifle when neighbours rushed to the scene. It is ironic that one of the neighbours who rushed to the seen was Ramalingam who raised the Nandi flag at the Jaffna Fort in December 1995 to celebrate the Sri Lankan army capture of Jaffna in the Sri Lankan military operation code named 'Riveresa (One)'. It then fell on Ramalingam to solemnly pick up the AK 47 rifle left behind by the soldier and return to the nearest army camp.

### Doctor Arrested and released

Dr Sivaguru, the Deputy Director of Medical Services for Kilinochi and Mullaitivu districts who was arrested by the Sri Lankan army has now been released. The Deputy Director of Medical Services was arrested on the 14th of May when he was on his way to an official medical conference in Trincomalee. The Sri Lankan army intelligence unit at the Thandikulam military check point interrogated him for three days. He has now been allowed to continue with his journey after obtaining signed statements. Dr Sivaguru is quite outspoken about the shortages of medicines and other facilities in the hospitals under his charge. Analysts say that this must have upset the Colombo authorities and eventually led to his arrest.

### Doctors, nurses decline to go to Jaffna

Doctors, nurses, and other medical staff who earlier fled to Vanni, have refused to comply with the Sri Lankan Government order to get back to the Sri Lankan army controlled areas in the Jaffna peninsula. The Assistant Director of medical services for Kilinochchi, Mannar and Mullaitivu districts, in a reply to the Government reflecting the firm decision of his employees, cited many issues raised by the medical staff who are now displaced in Vanni. The reply stated that the medical staff in Vanni did not want to return to the Sri Lankan army controlled areas in the Jaffna peninsula as they feared for their safety at the hands of the Sri Lankan armed forces. The reply also pointed out that there are urgent medical needs for the displaced people in Vanni and that it is their duty to stay where they are, to look after medical needs of the people in Vanni

### Tamil youth feared killed

Ratnasingam Ramamoorthy (21) who was arrested by the Sri Lankan armed forces at the Thandikulam Military check point two weeks ago is feared to have been killed by the Sri Lankan soldiers manning the check point. The young man, who was from Supparmadam in Vadamaratchi, wanted to pass through the military check point to find employment abroad to look after his newly married young wife whom he married six months ago.

### STF men attack civilians

The Sri Lankan Special Task forces (STF) severely attacked Tamil civilians in the Eththam area of Amparai during a cordon and search operation that was carried out by the forces on the 16th of May. The STF commandos entered peoples homes and destroyed their cooking utensils and household goods. Men, Women and children were assaulted for no apparent reason. Rasiah Sasikala a mother of one child was beaten so badly that both her legs were fractured. Rasamany (48) mother of 8 children, Kanthan (35) father of 5 children, Ratnam Rupa female (20), and Ramalingam male (45) were severely beaten by the STF forces. They also ordered Rasamany the mother of 8 children and Kanthan the father of 5 children to leave the village.

### Tamil fishermen fired at

On Monday the 20th of May, the Sri Lankan naval vessels indiscriminately opened fire on a group of Tamil fishermen who were fishing in the coastal waters of Pallimunai in Mannar seriously wounding a young fisherman. As the attack started the fishermen sped off to the coast and beached their boats. In spite of the evasive action, a young fisherman Alexander Selvakumar (24) was seriously wounded. He has now been admitted to Kilinochchi hospital.

### Shelling from Elephant Pass

On 22nd May, the Sri Lankan armed forces stationed at the Elephant Pass Army camp fired artillery shells on the coastal areas of Kunchi Paranthan in the Vanni side of the Jaffna lagoon. A woman who was collecting salt at the sea coast was seriously wounded at midday when a fragment from an exploding shell pierced her. About 20 shells were fired on the area after a Sri Lankan air force Puccara fighter plane circled the coastal area at about 11 AM. Two shells did not explode but were buried dangerously in the sand.

### Tamil patient turned away

A Tamil patient who was sent from Kilinochchi hospital in Vanni to get specialised urgent treatment at the Vavuniya hospital in Vavuniya was refused treatment and sent back by the military authorities who control the area. The doctors treating Krishnasamy at the Kilinochchi hospital had sent him in an ambulance to the Vavuniya hospital which had the facilities to perform an operation and to set his broken bones. The refusal of the military authorities to permit a treatment at Vavuniya has caused shock and anxiety among the medical circles in Vanni from where the patient was sent.

# HAS THE MILITARY BITTEN OFF MORE THAN IT CAN CHEW?

## PART 1

In contrast to Operation Riviresa 1 (OR1) and 2 (OR2), the instant success of Operation Riviresa 3 (OR3) without any resistance from LTTE forces must have come as a pleasant surprise for the government's military strategists. More than anything else, it seems to me to be indicative of a turning-point in the strategy and tactics of the LTTE struggle. In OR1, we saw how the LTTE's strong resistance (daring encounters, booby-trapped buildings etc.,) delayed the military's approach considerably. As a result, the military's onslaught became increasingly ruthless inflicting enormous damage on civilians and property. In OR2 and OR3, however, the LTTE's non-confrontational stance seems to have worked relatively well in terms of the civilians' well-being. Obviously, the LTTE had chosen to retreat for the time being, keeping its leadership and cadres essentially unbroken, in the face of a technologically and numerically superior conventional army. But, has the Sinhala-dominated military, by occupying a substantial part of the Tamil homeland, quite unwittingly, bitten off more than it can chew? Before reflecting on that, let us briefly dwell upon the prelude to OR3.

All the signals that came from the war zone indicated that OR2 was somewhat different from the previous military offensive (OR1) in terms of objectives. Clearly the aim of that was not to destroy, or even defeat, a substantial section of the LTTE cadres. The military was, obviously, well aware that the LTTE's forces were not going to wait there to get killed by random bombing and shelling. The military's target there was to redress the political defeat they faced last time as a result of the mass exodus of Tamil people (over half a million of them) away from the approaching Sinhala troops into LTTE-held territory. At the end of OR1, tens of thousands of Sinhala troops occupying empty land within alien territory amounted to military lunacy rather than a victory. So, the military leaders wanted to find ways of bringing back at least a section of the people who fled Valigamam last time. Some of the refugees had gone to Vanni and some had settled in Thenamarachchi, around Chavakachcheri. In Operation Riviresa 2, the military opted to target the settlers within Thenamarachchi rather than those within the jungle terrain in Vanni for obvious military convenience. Operation Riviresa 2 amounted to a premeditated attack on civilians at random in order to terrorise and force at least a substantial section of them to return to Valigamam so that the government can set up something resembling a government administration under military occupation, and thereby, provide a pretext for those foreign governments, which already provide assistance to crush the LTTE, to increase their support.

After terrorising the Tamil refugee-communities within Thenamarachchi through random bombing and shelling, the Sinhala troops effectively rounded up the areas around Chavakachcheri and forced them to return to Valigamam. The military's superior fire-power has obviously helped the armed forces prevent another exodus to Vanni territory. This time the operation was specially designed to abort such an eventuality. In order to try and stem the efforts of thousands of refugees to escape into Vanni, the military attacked the fleeing civilians through the Kilali lagoon and sealed off the Kilali escape route.

The LTTE, on its part, seemed to have learnt vital lessons from the (technologically and numerically superior) OR1 launched by the government forces over open terrain within the Jaffna peninsula, and hence this time they seemed to have chosen not to confront them directly, at least for the time being. Perhaps, they might have been thinking that it would be strategically wiser to concentrate on the vast jungle-terrain in Vanni which spreads from the western coast to the eastern coast occupying a strategic position with easy access to the northern peninsula as well as to the eastern province.

Episode two of the Riviresa operation, meanwhile, did not look like an effort to expand the military's territorial gains, even though they would be delighted to occupy the entire Jaffna peninsula if they could. Perhaps it was the growing passivity of the LTTE (in contrast to the strong resistance shown in OR1) which inspired the military to quickly move into Vadamarachchi. It took only 36 hours to occupy key positions within Vadamarachchi. The military lost only one soldier and that too was under accidental circumstances rather than in direct confrontation. The LTTE did not resist at all. It was clear that the LTTE had made a tactical withdrawal. In fact, the strategy of the LTTE seems to have undergone a fundamental change in response to the military's new strategy and tactics.

## MILITARY OCCUPATION OF JAFFNA PENINSULA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Obviously, it does not require a genius to foresee that the Tamil people are not going to enjoy life under Sinhala-military rule, and that friction between the Sinhala soldiers and the

Tamil civilians is bound to increase as time passes by. Judging by the fate which befell the government's political package, the chances of the Sinhala-dominated Centre offering a palatable solution to the Tamils are very slim indeed. In this context, the reasoning behind LTTE's new approach cannot be difficult to comprehend at all.

Just as they (the LTTE) did when they could not confront the Indian army directly (when IPKF troops occupied the Jaffna peninsula in 1987), the LTTE seems to have come to the realisation that the time has come to limit its struggle to guerrilla warfare, at least for the time being.

It is clear that allowing the military's limited resources to stretch to the limits in its effort to control additional areas within Jaffna terrain can only be advantageous to the LTTE in the longer run. In a recent interview published in Sunday Leader, army commander Daluwatta, answering the question "Do you think you have enough forces personnel to hold captured territory?", said: "There is a shortfall at present.... Although certain people in Colombo are talking about waging an all out war, they must realise that we do not have the necessary numbers" (Sunday Leader, 5 May). It is clear that now there exists an extremely weird situation in which an inadequate number of Sinhala troops are thinned out across a large area, all over the peninsula, and worst of all, in the midst of a hostile, but tight-lipped, populace, while the Sinhala soldiers are burdened with the dilemma of winning the hearts and minds of the Tamil people on the one hand and imposing tight security to prevent LTTE infiltration and attacks, on the other.

*Military occupation of war-ravaged Jaffna*

It was none other than President Kumaratunga herself who admitted just six months ago that the government forces will have to increase three-fold if the government wants to defeat the LTTE totally. She has yet to reveal the new wisdom that made her alter that calculation. Is the government going to borrow billions more and jeopardize the already tumbling economy?

According to informed sources, the military is said to be going through a tough time filling the places vacated by a constant stream of army deserters, let alone increasing the numbers three-fold. Therefore, the occupation of Vadamarachchi in Operation Riviresa 3 looks more like a quick response to the passive withdrawal of LTTE forces from the Jaffna terrain rather than part of a premeditated strategy.

The only other explanation one can provide for this sort of military adventurism is: political opportunism on the part of the crumbling SLFP-led government of Chandrika Kumaratunga. Many political observers in Colombo are predicting a snap general election to reap the benefits of war euphoria before it is too late. If that is the case, the military occupation of Jaffna should go down in history as the most ignoble act by any Sinhala government since Independence to exploit anti-Tamil hysteria in order to gain political power. This military adventure deserves to be judged by future historians to have surpassed all past acts against the Tamil nation by other Sinhala governments in terms of its criminality.

## PART 2

Let us give the benefit of doubt to the government and assume that the reason for OR3 was not political opportunism, but some other reason we cannot comprehend. Let us assume, for example, that Gen. Ratwatta naively believes that the military can somehow occupy the entirety of the Tamil homeland within a few months with existing resources, or perhaps with some additional resources, and eventually destroy the LTTE and the Tamil struggle. I shall argue, in what follows, that this strategy is bound to end up, not just in military disaster, but in economic and political disaster as well.

During the above mentioned interview, the army commander explained the objectives of Operation Riviresa 2 as follows: "We had three objectives in mind. Firstly, to get back the civilians who were in Valigamam, we opened a corridor. Secondly, the capture of Kilali lagoon. Thirdly to capture Thenamarachchi. "

Out of the three objectives he mentions here, the first, I think, is the most important one. The second and the third ones, in my view, were carried out only as necessary measures to facilitate the first objective. For, as I said earlier, the primary aim now is to try and establish at least a caricature of an administration to prepare the ground-work to carry out the political aspect of the government's strategy. This project seems to have two objectives. Firstly, to impress the foreign governments without whose help the government's war effort would collapse. The government wants to demonstrate to the world community that the Tamil people are eagerly waiting to accept an administration run by them. Secondly, to try and drive a wedge between the Tamil people and its leadership. (I have argued elsewhere that this second objective was part and parcel of the government's strategy even during the ill-fated peace process. For, both the government and military leaders believed that in order to crush the Tamil struggle it was imperative to marginalise the LTTE from the Tamil people).

*Tamil Nadu protest*

In my view the government is going to face nasty shocks in trying to achieve its objectives after forcing a section of the Tamil people to live under military rule manned by Sinhala soldiers.

In its effort to put its strategy into practice, the government has been compelled to create a ghetto for a section of the Tamil population under harsh military control.

The government seems to naively believe that it can create a conflict between the people and the LTTE by cleverly manipulating the "economic embargo" together with "military terrorism". On the one hand, the government is trying to bribe a section of the Tamil community into submission by offering lucrative incentives, such as money, food, electricity, medicine etc., to those who come to live within the military-controlled areas. Reports arriving from army-occupied territories, however, reveal that due to scarcity of essential food items prices are rocketing and people can be seen waiting in long queues to buy essential food items and many go away empty handed as shelves become empty very quickly due to short supply.

On the other hand, the government is trying to starve the Tamils into submission by imposing a total economic blockade on civilians living in LTTE-controlled areas, inflicting ruthless conditions on them, and terrorising them with random bombing and shelling. In this manner, the government seems to believe it can break the will-power of the Tamil people. Particularly, when the Tamils living in LTTE-controlled areas see the living conditions of those who live in military-controlled areas "improve", the government seems to think they might also be tempted to return there. As this phenomenon gathers momentum, the government believes, a conflict between the Tamil people and the LTTE is bound to break out. (On the contrary, however, reports coming from LTTE-controlled areas reveal that mass protest rallies against the government's ban on relief have become a common occurrence these days).

In government's calculation, the military offensive to weaken the LTTE will continue hand in hand with its political offensive to marginalise the LTTE. Thus, according to Lt. Gen. Daluwatta, "the military will be able to reduce LTTE activities to a low-level insurgency which will eventually fizzle out"(Sunday Leader).

Obviously, the government and the present military leaders have high hopes in their strategy. But, in my view, it has at least two fundamental flaws. Firstly, it underestimates the depth of the Tamil liberation struggle. There persists a monumental disability to grasp the strength of Tamil national consciousness which has developed in leaps, particularly during the past decade. **Secondly, the government's military strategy seems to be based on a model where political and economic factors in the South, and the situation in Tamil Nadu, are treated as constants, when , in fact, they are rapidly changing variables.**

Let me deal with the first mistake:

The government seems to think the Sinhala troops, who occupy part of the Tamil homeland surrounded by a hostile people led by the LTTE, would be able to create a ghetto for some Tamils totally cut off from the rest of the Tamil homeland and keep strict control and screening procedures to curb LTTE infiltration, and at the same time win those peoples' good-will merely by offering money and a few other facilities. I do not think this is going to work. **We must not forget that there is an entire generation who grew up totally under war conditions. Their main experience has been of ruthless Sinhala armed forces surrounding their homeland, shelling and bombing them constantly, killing their**

**fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. That young generation, or the Tamils in general for that matter, are not, in my view, going to rest until they see the back of the last Sinhala soldier occupying the Tamil homeland at present.**

All the signals we get from the military-controlled areas suggest that the troops are getting increasingly nervous and suspicious of every Tamil, particularly the youth, making the military administration extremely harsh, turning the so-called liberated areas into virtual concentration camps. Moreover, we already hear stories of the segregating of youth and parents in Valigamam for screening, and also of disappearances of young men and women in a random way bringing reminiscences of the terror period in the South of Sri Lanka when over 60,000 Sinhala youth were killed in a random way to try and terrorise the youth who were the backbone of the JVP uprising in the late 80's. In fact the methods being used in the North, at present, are strikingly similar to the methods used in the South . The military, we hear, is using masked men to identify LTTE supporters. These masked men, who are on the military pay-roll, are posted in prominent road junctions, mixed with Sinhala soldiers involved in vetting the local population. The masked men nod their heads to indicate identification of an LTTE supporter whereupon the person concerned is dragged away by the Sinhala soldiers. In practice, what happened when using this method in the Sinhala South during the JVP uprising was that the masked agents hired by the military became obliged to identify a certain number of people everyday in order to avoid they themselves becoming exposed to military suspicion. The masked men are reported to have nodded merely to prove their loyalty thus sending many innocent youth to certain death. Allegedly, similar things are presently happening in the North on a huge scale. Also, since the LTTE has had a de facto government in the North for number of years, I do not think one would be able to find many youth over there who did not have anything to do with the LTTE. So, the paid agents of the military probably would not have any difficulty in identifying LTTE supporters!

The point I want to make is this: As LTTE sabotage groups continue to harass the Sinhala soldiers occupying the Tamil homeland and as the troops get more and more nervous and paranoid, the military administration in the North is bound to end up antagonising the Tamil people under its control to a much worse level than it does now, thus making the Tamil people there a fertile ground for further LTTE activity.

*Army checks on civilians*

Now, let me come to the second weakness in the government strategy, namely, basing its model on the assumption that the military efforts in the North and East are taking place in a vacuum. I think this is a big mistake. We must not underestimate the direct implications of what is happening in the Tamil homeland to the political-economy in the South and the post-electoral Tamil Nadu.

Political observers who seriously study the developments in the South have clearly seen the rapidity with which the PA government is getting entangled in a massive economic and political crisis. As one political correspondent of a prominent English newspaper in Colombo described: "The country is at the verge of the biggest political and social chaos ever." Another political correspondent commented: "The PA government's edifice is collapsing".

The background to the cracking up of the single seat majority government of the People's Alliance is the escalating economic chaos, which is getting worse by the day, as a direct result of the unaffordable hi-tech war the government is waging against the Tamil struggle. While the government is borrowing billions of rupees to finance the mounting costs of the war, the country's development projects have come to a standstill. The welfare network is collapsing. Interest rates are rising. Investments are contracting. The balance of payments deficit and the budget deficit are gaping.

We must not forget that this government's economic strategy is almost entirely dependent on foreign investments. The LTTE has recently demonstrated its capacity to attack economic targets in Colombo by destroying the Central bank and oil storage plants, and attacking the main harbour. The effect of these attacks on the image of Sri Lanka as an "investment paradise" has been devastating. Moreover, the unmistakable message coming from the war zone, that the government is frantically getting bogged down in an enormously costly war and that President Kumaratunga is increasingly turning into a puppet of the military, is bound to contribute significantly to the growing reluctance of foreign investors to come to Sri Lanka.

It was against this background that over half a million Tamil plantation workers, who are reputed to be showing a growing support for the Tamil struggle, displayed their strength by waging a week long token strike costing the government and the plantation owners billions of rupees and making the bankers in Colombo from whom these plantation companies have borrowed billions of rupees " shudder in horror", as one analyst described.

So, it is amazing that in the midst of this rapidly deteriorating economic and political nightmare, the government and the military are giving such a highly optimistic and up-beat interpretation of the occupation of the Jaffna peninsular.

Moreover, the Sri Lankan government must be watching with grave concern the latest developments in India in general, and Tamil Nadu in particular, as the administrations in Delhi and in Madras, who had been faithfully helping the Colombo government in its war effort in so many ways, are being wiped from power. More than anything else, the Sinhala political establishment in Colombo should realise that the wiping out of the Congress means that the "Rajiv Gandhi factor", which has been crucial to the Sri Lankan government in mobilising Indian support for its war, is bound to become null and void in the coming months. Also, the emergence of Tamil Nadu as the strongest state in relation to an extremely weak centre could very well grip the imagination of the Tamil people there thus encouraging the new administration in Tamil Nadu to take a positive interest in the plight of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka. We must not forget that it was in last December the Trade Union Movement in Tamil Nadu launched a token general strike in support of the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka, which brought the entire state to a total shut down. Also, it is worth remembering the recent public meetings organised by influential pressure groups, including some important film actors and producers, in protest against the Indian central government's involvement in sinking LTTE supply ships. Referring to these pressure groups, Taraki, an expert on Indian affairs, wrote: "If the DMK leader were to become a key player in deciding the course of the hung parliament in Delhi, this lobby is in a position to persuade him to intercede on their behalf for securing the Indian central government's neutrality in the war against the Tigers..." (Sunday Times of Sri Lanka, 12 may `96)

In all probability the newly emerging atmosphere in Tamil Nadu, where Tamil nationalism is growing in relation to a crisis-ridden Centre, will realise a tremendous potential which the LTTE can exploit on an unprecedented scale. The interpretation given in most Colombo newspapers regarding what they see as the "anti-LTTE implications of the Indian election results" is, in my view, tantamount to wishful thinking. Also, some observers' effort to begin their analysis with the "static nature" (sic) of RAW and the Indian military establishment etc., is to grip the wrong side of the baton.

*Mr. Karunanithi*

Just as the Indian Leftist movement has strengthened, reflecting the people's growing frustration over the traditional political establishment's failure to eradicate poverty, nationalism can also be seen mounting as a consequence of the Indian constitution's inability to satisfy the growing aspirations of numerically smaller nations to stand on an equal footing with other nations (even within the framework of a united country) and determine their own future in voluntary co-operation with other nations. In fact, the collapse of the Jayalalitha-administration can be partly, if not mainly, seen as a result of growing Tamil nationalism in Tamil Nadu.

The DMK has always been seen by the Tamils in Tamil Nadu as the vehicle for Tamil autonomy. Mr. Karunanidhi has always fought for restructuring the Indian Union to arrive at a fully-fledged confederation. He is bound to renew this campaign in the context of his newly-found strength in relation to the weak Centre.

It is not accidental, in my view, that Mr.Karunanidhi, while dissociating himself from the LTTE, preferred to maintain his empathy with "Thamil Eelam" as a solution to the national conflict in Sri Lanka. This reflected the pressure from the DMK rank and file within which there exists a strong support for the Tamil struggle. Now that the election is over and the Congress is heavily defeated that support can only grow, opening up new opportunities for the LTTE to accelerate its political campaign for Tamil Nadu backing. If tactfully handled by the LTTE, the Tamil Nadu support could easily rise beyond mere neutrality. (After all, both parties have essentially the same ideal, i.e. to restructure the artificial state-structures of respective countries, albeit, Sri Lanka's state-structure is far more rigid and unjust than the Indian one, in relative terms). It is in this context that I strongly believe it would be in the Sri Lankan government's interest to respond positively to the LTTE's offer for peace-negotiations with Third Party mediation. The official monthly paper of the LTTE, "The Viduthalai Puligal", in response to the Sri Lankan army commander Rohan Daluwatta's recent speech that further military expansion into Tamil territory is on the cards, has strongly warned that such a military policy will bring terrible military disasters and defeats to the government forces. It has also warned that such a policy to impose a military solution will put an end to find a political settlement through talks with Third Party mediation.

I can clearly foresee the depth of that warning and I think the Sinhala-dominated government in Colombo should think again about its present strategy and consider the wisdom of resuming peace talks with the LTTE as soon as possible; but this time, in the presence of a Third Party acceptable to both sides.

***Vasantha Rajah***

***20 May 96***

# "Tamils are reduced to a starving & vagrant people"

## *U.S. Tamil Organisations write to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister*

*May 17, 96*
*Hon. Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi*
*Chief Minister*
*Tamil Nadu, INDIA*

Dear Kalaignar:

As representatives of different organizations of Sri Lankan Tamils domiciled in the United States, we offer you our heartfelt congratulations on your resounding victory in Tamil Nadu.

We consider your victory as a victory for Tamils the world over. We confidently expect that it will usher in a period of cultural, political and economic progress, most certainly for those in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Tamils have suffered terribly in recent years at the hands of successive authoritarian governments in Colombo driven by Sinhala Buddhist chauvinism. Even President Kumaratunga seems to be now committed to that ideology as a political necessity. Her army's objective seems to be to destroy Tamils as a viable society. Her devolution proposals have several major flaws. Among others, they do not include a unified region for the Tamils; power will remain highly centralized, including the power to dismiss regional governments; and they can be changed by the Sinhala majority at any time.

Over the years, the Tamil people and their land have been ravaged by indiscriminate bombing and artillery attacks; thousands have been detained, tortured and killed; women violated; and most of their homes, schools, temples and churches destroyed or severely damaged.

An historic and flourishing Tamil community, noted for its many accomplishments, has been reduced to a starving and vagrant people by the Sri Lankan army. Nearly the entire Tamil population (about two million) of the Tamil homeland in the north east of Sri Lanka has been displaced. Jaffna has been turned into a vast prison and wasteland under army occupation, with no means of escape to the mainland. The small part of the peninsula around Point Pedro which is still outside army control contains over 300,000 persons. It and the area around Kilinochchi on the mainland are exposed to imminent army attack.

The Sri Lankan army, which, according to President Kumaratunga's own admission, has killed over 30,000 Sinhalese during the JVP insurgency during 1971 to 1991, surely will not hesitate to terrorize and murder many Tamils under their control.

**Every Tamil family in the north east, including families of members of our organizations, has been touched by the government's cruelties. Sadly, no voice has been raised by the international community about this humanitarian crisis.**

Inhuman crimes are still being perpetrated by the Sinhala army against the Tamils of Sri Lanka under cover of a strict news blackout for which there is no modern parallel - in Bosnia, Chechnya, Rwanda or elsewhere.

In addition, the Tamils in the north have been subjected to a vicious economic blockade designed to starve them of food, medicines and other essentials, and thereby force them into submission.

In this time of extreme peril for Sri Lankan Tamils, we feel that you alone can bring them some urgent relief and eventually help them to find a space for themselves, where their freedom, safety and cultural and economic development can be assured.

We appeal to you, as a first step, to request, perhaps through a public statement, the government in Colombo for urgent action on the following:

1. Permit truly free access to the press, diplomatic and U.N. personnel and to relief agencies to all parts of the north and east (one or more brief visits of press persons closely escorted by the army will not suffice); and

2. Increase the supply of necessities like food, medicines, fuel, fertilizer, etc. to the north, most importantly to the displaced people.

3. To desist from further attacks on areas with a concentration of refugee people; e.g., Kilinochchi.

We are confident that such a request by you, which would be consistent with internationally accepted democratic and humanitarian principles would make a meaningful difference, not only in Colombo and Delhi, but also in other capitals of the world. Many of these governments have had serious concerns about the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, but sadly have kept silent.

We would also very respectfully appeal to you to consider designating one or more senior members of the D.M.K. or of your cabinet to watch closely developments pertaining to the Tamils of Sri Lanka and to advise you on those matters. Such a step would be a clear signal of your strong interest in that area.

*We remain, yours respectfully,*
**Nagalingam Jeyalingam**
*President, Ilankai Tamil Sangam*

**Joined by:**

The Action Group of Tamils in the United States
Eelam Tamils Association (MA)
Federation of Association of
Canadian Tamils (Canada)
Ilankai Tamil Sangam - Florida Chapter (FL)
Ilankai Tamil Sangam (TX)
International Tamil League Foundation (IL)
Northern California Tamil Sangam (CA)
Tamil Eelam Association of Ohio (OH)
Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (MD)
Tamil Refugee Rehabilitation Organization (CA)
Tamil Welfare & Human Rights Committee (DC)
World Tamil Coordinating Committee (NY)
World Tamil Organization (NC)

# Flashback 1988

# WHAT SINGAPORE LEARNT FROM SRI LANKA'S SAD HISTORY

*Following is a report from THE STRAITS TIMES, dated 13 January,1988, containing excerpts of Deputy Prime minister Goh Chok Tong's speech at the end of the debate on the Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Bill. Mr.Goh Chok Tong is now Prime Minister having succeeded the founding father of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew in 1990. Lee Kuan Yew continues as elder statesman holding the post of Senior minister.*

**Sri Lanka and the deep-rooted problems between its Sinhalese and Tamil peoples are a world apart from Singapore. But in its sad history of racial politics gone tragically wrong lies vital lessons for multiracial Singapore.Mr.Goh Chok Tong said.**

"I dont have to go into a critique of the weakness of the Westminister model of democracy for us because some MPs have adequately dealt with this question.

"But again, by way of illustration as to what can happen with this system, let me cite Sri Lanka again.

"I know it might not be 100 percent fair to use Sri Lanka as an example because our two societies are different. The Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka have centuries of rivalry, even enmity, between them. We dont have that between the Malays, the Indians and Chinese in Singapore.

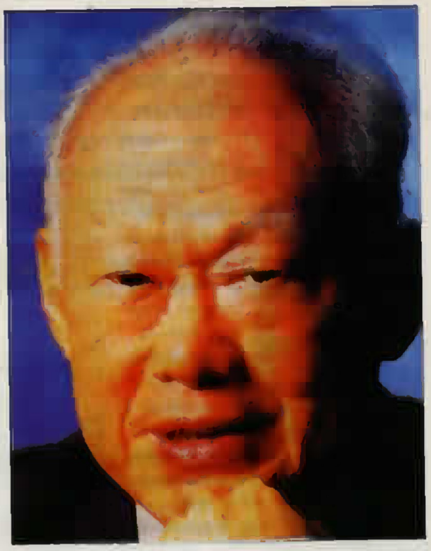
**"But neverthless, what has happened in Sri Lanka is that the system has resulted in the majority community, which is a Sinhalese community, ending up lording it over a minority community - which is a Tamil community.**

"Sri Lanka gained its independence in 1948. At elections thereat the Sinhalese captured more than two-thirds the number of seats in Parliament. With that kind of majority, the Tamil minority could do nothing to stop any policy that the government wanted to implement. So the government made Sinhala the only official language. It introduced a quota system whereby access to higher education was controlled.

"Before that, there were far too many Tamils entering University, so Parliament allowed the government to restrict the number, standardisation as they called it, so that you had more Sinhalese entering university as compared to Tamils - not necessarily on the basis of merit. Could the Tamil minority do anything? They could not because they had less than one-third the numer of seats in Parliament.

"And estate Tamils had their votes taken away from them. There are two kinds of Tamils in Sri Lanka: Jaffna Tamils, that is, Tamils who had settled in Sri Lanka long, long ago; and estate Tamils, those who came from India to work in the tea plantations. The estate Tamils were disenfranchised. Their votes were taken away from them. So the Tamil minority never had a chance to make their views felt in Parliament.

"They could say what they liked. but they had no power in Parliament to change the course of events dictated by the majority community.



*Lee Kuan Yew: The founding father of Singapore*

"Sri Lanka gained its independence in 1948. The first major outbreak of communal violence took place in 1958. The next major outbreak occured in 1977. In 1983, a violent war broke out between Tamil separatists and government forces. In 1987, Indian troops intervened.So on November 12, 1987, a new Bill was passed in Parliament - an amendment was made to the Constitution to make Tamil an official language, to set up provincial councils in a unified north and eastern unified Tamil area.

"President Jayewardene wrote to our Prime Minister on November 26, 1987. Our Prime minister circulated the letter to other Cabinet colleagues. I thought the sentiments expressed in that letter contained a message for us, so I wrote to the Prime Minister and asked him whether he could ask President Jayewardene to give me permission to quote extracts from his letter. I have the permission of President Jayewardene to do so.(Mr.Goh then read extracts from the letter - see box)

"The President has lived for a long time. He was born in 1906. He would be about 81 years old now. He first entered politics in 1940, when he became a member of the Colombo Municipal Council. So, after so many years in politics, after so many years embroiled in the politics of a country, he is doing for Sri Lanka what our Prime minister did for Singapore years ago. In 1965, for example, when we became independent - FOUR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES NOT ONE.

"After the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, when the President was asked for the reasons for his failure to avoid four years of escalating violence, he replied in sadness and humility:

**"My own lack of intelligence, lack of foresight and courage were the reasons".**

This government had the intelligence to establish the Constitutional Commission in December 1965. soon after independence, to consider safeguards "the rights of the racial, religious, and linguistic minorities" in the Constitution.

It had the intelligence and foresight. and courage to have four official languages when the political ground was dominated by the Chinese-educated. That was 22 years ago.

"Today, do we, the Parliamentarians, have the intelligence, the foresight and courage to take affirmative action to avoid a situation where Parliament may end up where one community is not adequately represented .The amendment to the Constitution and Parliamentary Elections Act will ensure that the interests of the minority communities will always be represented in Parliament We are under no illusion, however, that these two Bills are all we need to preserve multi-racialism in our society. It must be followed by greater involvement and participation by the Malay community in the mainstream of decision-making, whether it's in the Cabinet, the Public Service Commission, or the Armed Forces Council."......

## Jayewardene's exposition

(Extracts from the letter sent to Lee Kuan Yew by the then President Junius Richard Jayewardene)

"All our earlier constitutions had assumed homogenity and uniformity in the society when the realities were otherwise and hardly warranted the assumption..

"As might be expected, the realities asserted themselves and did so in a manner that communally diverted key postulates of a democratic society"

"Majority vote became the voting power of communal majorities driving minorities increasingly outside mainstream politics into politics aimed increasingl at their own communal electorates.

"Not only did the country become entrapped in the divisiveness of such politics but also the party system, one-man-one-vote, representative institutions, the principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, all cherished features of the democratic systems recording centuries of evolution and maturation, became norms subverted in the reality, virtually keys turning the wrong side in the lock . . . .

# Chirac's special envoy visits Sri Lanka

*French President Jacque Chirac*

Colombo. May 10 (AFP) - A special envoy of French President Jacque Chirac left Sri Lanka Friday ending a two-nation Asian visit with calls for greater Franco - Asian relations, officials said.

Minister of State for foreign Affairs Margie Sudre who held talks with President Chandrika Kumaratunga on Thursday said she was keen to improve ties with Sri Lanka.

"Trade between the two countries may not have been enormous," Sudre said in an interview here. "It could be because France has not given sufficient weightage to relations with Asia."

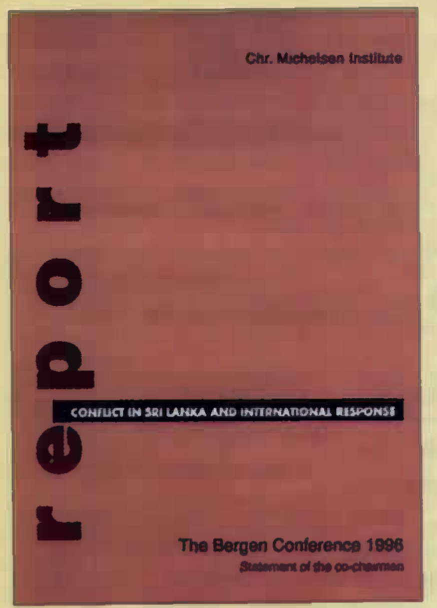
She arrived here Tuesday after a visit to Nepal where she held talks with Nepali leaders. She left here Friday for South Africa, officials said.

Sudre said France hoped to improve trade with Sri Lanka in areas of telecommunications, electricity generation and water treatment. France will next week sign a loan and aid package worth 50 million francs (10 million dollars) to help Sri Lanka.

The visiting Minister also held talks with several senior ministers and opposition leader Ranil Wickremasinghe and said she felt Sri Lankan leaders were keen to resolve the country's protracted Tamil separatist war plaguing the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

# *Rudrakumaran on the Bergen Conference report*

# "LTTE DOES NOT SERVE THE INTERESTS OF ANY EXTERNAL PATRON"



Chr. Michelsen Institute

report

CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The Bergen Conference 1996

Statement of the co-chairmen

*May 13th, 1996*
*Mr. Svein Grjerdaker*
*Head of Information*
*CHR. MICHELSEN INSTITUTE*
*Development Studies and Human Rights*
*Fantoftregen 38*
*N-5036 FANOFT*
*Norway*

Dear Mr. Grjerdaker:

Thank you for sending me the statement of the co-chairmen of the 1966 Bergen Conference on "the Conflict in Sri Lanka and International Response". With all due respect, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the above report did not accurately reflect the views or ideas, especially mine, that were expressed and discussed at the Conference. This may partly be my own fault; hence I take this opportunity to restate my views with greater clarity

In my view, the following passages in the report need correction:

(1) *The present conflict in Sri Lanka has its origin in a long-standing, difficult relationship between the ethnic majority and the principal minority in the island state... the issue of a separate Tamil nation - which has been the most fundamentally divisive of all - was set aside as the participants sought to define points of common interest...*

In my presentation, I explicitly stated that the crux of the matter is that the island of Sri Lanka is inhabited by at least two distinct nations - the Sinhalese and the Tamils - along with a few other communities. For example, the Muslims have a separate identity though they make no claims to nationhood. **The current conflict stems from the exclusion of the Tamil nation by the Sinhalese from political and the power process. This continual denial and deception on the part of the Colombo political establishment is not merely self-defeating; it hinders all prospects for a negotiated settlement that would squarely address the true causes of the conflict.** A firm recognition of the simple truth that the island of Sri Lanka is the home of two nations, both endowed with a legitimate right to nationhood, would certainly help the parties to advance towards the resolution of issues that are at stake in the current conflict.

(2) *When the LTTE broke the truce (April 19, 1995) hostilities resumed and culminated in a massive military offensive by government forces against Jaffna... The LTTE violated the cease-fire. These were technicalities. Poor conference preparation, it seemed, on the government side, enabled the LTTE to press its agenda, thus in turn set off the wrong signals on the other side...The confrontation has not only military and terrorist dimensions as the LTTE seeks to compensate for its defeat in the Jaffna Peninsula by carrying the violence in Colombo... ..The LTTE retaliated with terrorist bombings that took a heavy death toll and caused much material damage...*

In my presentation I stated that due to censorship the truth itself has become a victim. As examples, I cited the causes of the collapse of the peace process and the ensuing blame that had been placed on the LTTE. The Sri Lankan government's escalation of its military might even as the talks were in progress; the LTTE's insistence that the urgent day-to-day problems of severe food, medicine and fuel shortages be given priority; the LTTE's proposal to address four situations of paramount importance, three of which were related to civilian life; the LTTE's withdrawal from the negotiations in accordance with its three week notice, whereas the agreement required only a 72 hour notice - all these facts are relevant to forming a correct opinion of the LTTE's behaviour, but none of them were brought to the international community's attention, as a result of the Tamils lack of media access. On the other hand the government's lifting of the food embargo, a belated fulfillment of a state's moral and legal obligation to its citizens, was widely hailed as President Chandirika's magnanimous concession. This is largely due to the manner in which the event was represented in the media. **When the LTTE explicitly announced its willingness to consider a political arrangement short of an independent**

**state, their act of good will was not appreciated by the international community, again because of the lack of adequate media coverage.**

Furthermore, I must object to your statements regarding the political violence that is attributed without proof to LTTE and characterized as "terrorist activities", while the Sri Lankan government's very own actions, such as the Navali Church bombing, the Nagarkovil School bombing, the Kumarapuram massacre and the "Operation Sunshine", which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people and the displacement of over 500,000, are described (in fact, excused!) as a mere military offensive. **Such tenuous and unjust distinctions are not conducive to a negotiated settlement facilitated by a third party.**

(3) *Presently discussed by the Select Committee of the Parliament, the devolution package is considered by many Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese as the most promising avenue to negotiations and a renewed peace process.*

In my presentation, I stated that the illusion, shared by many today, that President Chandirika's devolution package is a magical cure for the national conflict in Sri Lanka, is also the product of the well-orchestrated media campaign by the Sri Lankan government. It is very sad that many bought the spurious package without the benefit of a detailed analysis of its contents.

Having pointed out the absence of a division of power; the legally and historically false assumption that there exists in Colombo a legitimate higher authority from which power may somehow 'devolve' to the North Eastern Region; the permanent racism of the political majority; the absence of concurrent majority rule; the uncertainty of the intended life span of Mrs. Kumaratunga's proposals; the uncertainty of the permanence of the constituent unit boundaries; the rupture of the territorial integrity of Tamil homeland; the absence of a symmetrical relationship which is essential to the effective participation of the North Eastern Region in the power process, my analysis concluded that President Chandirika's proposal is thoroughly unacceptable and probably insincere.

(4) *Finally, all parties of the Conference accepted the principle of administrative decentralization and further devolution of power as a key to a political settlement.*

My presentation pointed out that the current conflict was not an outcome of the manner in which power was distributed between the center and the regions. Citing Professor K.M. de Silva, Hon. H.L. de Silva, the current Sri Lankan representative to the United Nations, and economist N.U. Jayawardena, I emphasized there was no enthusiasm for devolution in the Sinhalese areas and that such a devolution would result in the duplication of establishment costs and would come as a great burden to a small state.

> *"The LTTE, a liberation movement that is quite unlike an entrenched state, quite simply does not have the luxury to obtain the services of public relation firms."*

For the sake of a clear comparison, I cited the U.S. administration's rejection of the so-called Vance Owen Plan, whose implementation would have divided Bosnia into several territories with a view to devolving power to them from the center, and the proposal of the U.S. administration, which took into consideration that the conflict in Bosnia is about political power and territory, and which sought to ensure that "Bosnia and Herzegovina will consist of two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina...and the Republic of Srpska."

Finally, I stressed that the concept of administrative decentralization was not only discarded by the Tamil people but there also was a growing awareness of it's futility on the part of the Sinhala establishment itself.

(5) *The LTTE also used the Conference to reintroduce the idea of power-sharing at the centre, thus indicating its commitment to remain within the Republic.*

*A criticism of the devolution package has been that it does not provide for power-sharing at the centre. Central power-sharing eg: representation of regional interests as the Liberal Party has proposed, could be a mechanism to counter the centrifugal forces that a regional devolution of power will institutionalize.*

In my presentation I stated that in order to become potentially acceptable, President Chandrika's proposals should be modified to include provisions for a concurrent majority rule and parity at the center. These concepts are necessary to preclude the tyranny of the majority, to ensure the permanence of any power- sharing arrangement, and to permit effective participation in the political and power process by all principals.

My proposal was largely along the lines of the political settlement for Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereby the constituent units share power at the center. For instance, in Bosnia, any decisions that affect interests of constituent entity must be made by the presidency in concurrence with the appropriate entity's parliament. I would like to mention that the idea of a second chamber never even came up in the presentations or in the discussions.

(6) *Apart from the Tamil diaspora, the movement is increasingly isolated internationally, has lost its only external patron (India), has no plat-*

*form at international organizations or in the UN, and as noted at the Conference - has even poor access to international media.*

**As you mentioned, the LTTE, unlike other movements, does not serve the interests of any external patron. It only serves the interests of the Tamil people in the Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka. It is an indigenous movement, a fact of which the LTTE is indeed very proud.** That the LTTE does not have a platform at the UN or other international organizations is hardly the LTTE's own fault. Unfortunately, this is the way that international organizations are typically set up. It is true, for example, that ANC and PLO were accorded observer status at the UN, but this happened through the sponsorship of regional organizations. As you know, the first regional organization in South Asia - SAARC - came into existence only a few years ago. As a result of it's partiality as well as of political manipulation, SAARC does not allow non-state entities to bring their grievances before this regional forum, let alone forwarding such grievances to international forums. **Indeed, precisely the lack of internal or international machinery capable of resolving the Tamils' grievances has, among other things, led the LTTE to resort it to its armed campaign.**

As regards the LTTE's "poor access to international media", I observed in my presentation that the ban of the international reporters from the North Eastern regions has resulted in a great and deplorable obfuscation of all relevant truths. Moreover, the LTTE, a liberation movement that is quite unlike an entrenched state, quite simply does not have the luxury to obtain the services of public relation firms.

(7) *Given the separatist nature of the original conflict full recognition of the LTTE as representing the "Tamil Nation" is not the issue. If that were accorded as a procedural issue in the negotiations, substantive negotiations would not be necessary since LTTE would have obtained its principled aim...Since the LTTE in a large measure has failed to do so - and has lost some of the international sympathy it used to enjoy - the government, it seems, can afford to be generous in providing a sense of the recognition for the movement so as to facilitate talks.*

I explicitly stated in my presentation that conflict resolution should proceed from such values as human dignity, respect for humanity and national equality, and others. I also mentioned that from a legal point of view the Tamils constitute a nation, and thus the LTTE; as an authentic representative of the Tamils, should be treated in accordance with the norms ensuring equality among nations, while the Sinhala establishment unfortunately persists in denying these values and treating the Tamil nation with paternalistic condescension.

Such flagrant attitudes and strategies are not at all conducive to a long-term political settlement. I take this opportunity to reiterate my gratitude to the Norwegian government, and the CMI's profound concern for the human suffering in the North Eastern parts of Sri Lanka and its commitment to facilitate a peaceful resolution. I hope that my desire to correct the significant inaccuracies of the report is understandable. The LTTE's position regarding these issues has too often been either suppressed or misrepresented, and I consider it my duty to achieve clarification where possible.

# The "ruinous impact" of war on Sri Lanka's finances

***Angus Tulloch*, a director of Stewart Ivory & Company, Edinburgh, writing in the 20 May issue of INVESTMENT WEEK, says:-**

In stark contrast to the country's striking success on the cricket field, Sri Lanka's recent stockmarket performance has been most disappointing. The All-Share Index has fallen sharply from its peak reached in early 1994, and is now trading at less than half its all time high. Politics have been almost entirely to blame........

Meanwhile, the war is having a ruinous impact on Sri Lanka's finances. Military expenditure, for instance, has pushed up the government deficit to an unsustainable level - around 10% of GDP. The country's significant tourism industry is facing a drop in arrivals of a third from last year's levels. Direct inward investment is being held back. High interest rates are depressing consumer demand and deterring domestic capital expenditure.

Equally damaging is the weak leadership now being displayed by the President and her Government on other than military matters. While few doubt her good intentions, the lack of direction, co-ordination and discipline from the top has resulted in unedifying power struggles and confused policy signals, as well as bureaucratic inertia and inconsistency........

Running a divided coalition with a parliamentary majority of one, and fighting a war at the same time, can be no easy task. However, unless the President improves her management techniques, or at least learns to delegate, confidence will languish at its present very low level.

## *Forthcoming Events: June - July*

# PEACE WITH JUSTICE : CANBERRA CONFERENCE

An International Conference on the Conflict in Sri Lanka will be held in Canberra, in Australia on 27 - 28 June 1996. On the theme, Peace with Justice, the Conference is being held under the auspices of the Australian Human Rights Foundation and the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations.

The Chairman of the 2-day Conference is Professor C.J.Eliezer. Rev.Richard F.Wootton and Mr.Ravi Chandra are acting as Conference Secretaries.

Speakers are expected from Asia, Europe, North America and South Africa.

The four sessions will be be devoted to the following themes: The Conflict: An analysis; The current occupation of Jaffna and the consequences; Peace - obstacles and possibilities; The role of the International Community; Struggle of small nations and the Tamil position.

# International Conference on Tamil Culture in Toronto

International Movement for Tamil culture - Canada has announced that the 6th International Conference on Tamil Culture is Scheduled to be held in Toronto at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on August 24, 25 and 26 1996.

The International Movement for Tamil culture was founded by the Tamil scholars, particularly by the efforts of Mr. R. Kanagaratnam of Kurumpasiddy, Professor S. Vithianathan. The inaugural meeting was held in Jaffna, Tamil Eelam at the conclusion of the World Tamil Research conference on Jan. 8, 1974. Today there are branches in 52 countries and the movement sustains its head office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with Professor R. N. Veerappan as Pressident.

The broad objective of this movement is to encourage the Tamils living in various parts of the world to preserve and foster the Tamil Language and the Tamil culture.

The first five International Conferences on Tamil Culture were previously held in Madras, Mauritius, Salem, Kuala Lumpur and Sydney.

Although Tamils are living in about 152 countries around the world, yet in many of these countries they are at the verge of losing their identity as Tamils. The 6th International Conference seeks to achieve the following goals amidst the movement's broad objective:

(a) To create an awareness among the Tamils of importance of learning and using the Tamil Language in order to preserve our culture and our identity.

(b) To demonstrate the richness of the traditional Tamil culture and arts and encourage the Tamils to observe and practise them.

(c) To expose and protest the victimization of Tamils on a global basis.

(d) To establish links between the Tamils in various parts of the world.

The steering committee of the 6th International Conference on Tamil Culture earnestly requests every one to help in organizing this conference with success.

# CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA

## INTERNATIONAL CONCERN

Symposium on the Tamil National Question organised by the
**International Tamil Foundation.**

Sunday 21st July 1996

**Kumar Ponnambalam,**
*Secretary General, All Ceylon Tamil Congress*
**Visvanathan Rudrakumaran,**
*Political Adviser, LTTE International Unit, USA.*
**Bryn Wolfe**
*Executive Secretary, NGO Forum on Sri Lanka.*

**Venue**
Dryburgh Hall,
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# Negotiated political solution? The Goebellsian "Big Lie"

*Statement By Action Group of Tamils in Colombo (AGOTIC)*

The Rt. Hon Jeremy Hanley, the British Minister of State and Commonwealth Affairs reportedly told the visiting Sri Lankan Commerce and Food Minister Mr. Kingsley Wickremeratne, that the British government is "fully supportive of the initiative taken by President Chandrika Kumaratunga to find a political solution to the ethnic problem"

The British minister was no doubt at his diplomatic best for it is very unlikely that he is unaware of the "ground situation" in Sri Lanka.

Nevertheless, and in view of similar comments made recently by some other representatives of foreign governments, the Action Group of Tamils in Colombo (AGOTIC) is compelled to place the following points on record.

President Kumaratunga announced her "Devolution Proposal" on the evening of August 3, 1995. The stated intention then allegedly was to present the proposal to the public and generate public awareness about its contents.

The Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Prof. G. L.Peiris explained that the proposal will go through the following five stages:

1. The President will strive to reach a consensus within her Peoples Alliance government.

2. Then the proposal will be finalised as a draft chapter of a new constitution and be submitted to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Constitutional reform.

3. The PSC, which is a forum for all parties in Parliament must reach a consensus on the draft chapter.

4. Thereafter the draft chapter will be presented to Parliament to obtain a two-thirds majority vote.

5. After obtaining a two-third majority, the proposal will be placed before the people at a referendum.

The draft chapter was officially made public as the draft provisions of the constitution on January 16, 1996 and later submitted to the PSC.

The success of this five-stage process depends on the following crucial factors.

Firstly, the President must be able to marshall the support of other members of the PA to reach a consensus.

But the DUNLF is implacably opposed to the Draft Provisions; and there are reliable indications that influential sections within the President's own Sri Lanka Freedom Party also oppose the draft provisions.

On January 24 the member-parties of the PA announced that they would be meeting on February 12 to deliberate on the draft provisions; but nothing has been heard from them to date about the proposed meeting.

Clearly the President has failed to cobble together a consensus within the PA government, which has NOT collectively accepted responsibility for the draft provisions.

Therefore AGOTIC is of the view that the present draft provisions are NOT the proposals of the PA government.

Secondly, the PSC has to function effectively. But it has yet to conduct orderly business due to absenteeism and an occasional lack of a quorum, partly because some PA members have neglected to attend the deliberations.

Thirdly, the President surely knows that she must solicit the support of the United National Party in the parliamentary opposition in order to obtain a two-third majority vote in Parliament.

But the President has consistently antagonised the UNP.

She has repeatedly chastised them for their past political actions; and her Governors even dissolved two UNP controlled Provincial councils in the North-Central and Sabaragamuwa provinces. The Courts have since held that their actions are illegal and the dissolution orders have been quashed.

Therefore AGOTIC is of the view that the President has deliberately foreclosed every avenue of potential support from the UNP.

It is impossible for her now to claim with any credibility that she is attempting to secure a two-third majority vote in Parliament.

Fourthly, the President has been forced to declare Emergency rule islandwide and to postpone Local Government Elections.

It follows that the popularity of the PA government and the SLFP in particular among the Sinhala people is sinking fast.

Given the fact that she has already antagonised the UNP, the President cannot even pretend that she could win approval at a nationwide referendum for her draft provisions.

Therefore AGOTIC is of the view that President Kumaratunga has consciously and effectively terminated the "peace process".

This reveals that she propagated a Goebellsian " Big Lie", of seeking a negotiated political solution; that she always had and still has ONLY a military option and nothing else to resolve ethnic conflicts.

At this point we must reflect on the arguments advanced by the so-called "peaceniks'" who are members of the conflict resolution and peace lobbies in Colombo.

*Chandrika: The Big Lie*

When the President unleashed the armed forces to capture Jaffna, the peaceniks supported her actions.

Indeed, immediately after the "fall" of Jaffna on December 5, 1995, a prominent Sinhala "peacenik", Dr. Jehan Perera, in fact took pride in the NGOs' contribution and insisted that "the human rights NGOs have to be given their share of 'credit' for the governmental victory in Jaffna.

The peaceniks explained their support for the military campaign on the following gounds: when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is weakened or defeated and the armed forces established direct control over the Jaffna peninsula, the President's hand will be strengthened against the Sinhala oppositon in the South.

This, they said, will embolden her to sell her devolution proposals to the Sinhala "people" and will therefore make peace all the more possible.

In other words, the peaceniks made the following assertions:

Firstly they claimed in effect that it is necessary to maim and kill thousands of Tamil men, women and children in the North (and later in the East) and bomb and shell Tamil homes and schools in order to placate Sinhala public opinion. AGOTIC refrains from comment here.

Secondly, the peaceniks believed that after the armed forces established direct control over the Tamil areas, the President would through sheer altruism relinquish that control by devolving power to a Tamil administration in the north and east.

That is, they believed that the President will voluntarily give away at the negotiating table all or most of what she won on the battlefield. This is pure and simple self-serving political bilge.

AGOTIC can only conclude that the peaceniks must possess grossly warped minds and an abysmally neanderthal logic.

On the other hand, AGOTIC believes in giving credit where credit is due. President Kumaratunga has skillfully manipulated New Delhi, exploiting India's well known strategic need for a stable southern border.

Her evident intention was to offer the August 1995 Devolution Proposals and induce New Delhi to in return rein in Tamil Nadu so as to give her a free hand to pursue tha assault on Jaffna.

New Delhi naively assumed that the Devolution Proposal will, at the most with some modifications, be implemented after the "fall" of Jaffna so as to satisfy India's security concerns.

New Delhi kept its side of the bargain.

But President Kumaratunga published a vastly diluted version of the Proposals as the Draft Provisions, which even the Tamil politicians in Colombo are embarrassed to support.

This means that New Delhi will again be terribly disappointed by the actions of Colombo.

Then again, all is fair in love and war.

# INDIA POISED FOR ATOMIC SUBS

India is set to join the world's select club of nations that posses nuclear submarines, according to the latest annual edition of JANE'S FIGHTING SHIPS. Its editor, Captain Richard Sharpe, says the Indian nuclear submarine programme was a well-funded top priority with Russian design assistance. Building is due to start in 1997, and the subs will be in service by 2004.

There is no shortage of technical expertise to develop the nuclear sumarines that are at present confined to the United States, Russia, France, Britain and China. "The world is full of Russian technocrats who are no longer required by Moscow but are seeking employment from anyone", Captain Sharpe says.

Next to join the nuclear sea powers after India could be Japan and Brazil, says the report. Japan could easily develop its own nuclear submarine fleet but lacks the political will. Brazil's nuclear submarine won't take to the seas before the next century. "It is unlikely to happen quickly there. It is on the back burner for the moment", the editor says.

The report also says: "The whole Indian subcontinent has about it an overheated atmosphere of instability".

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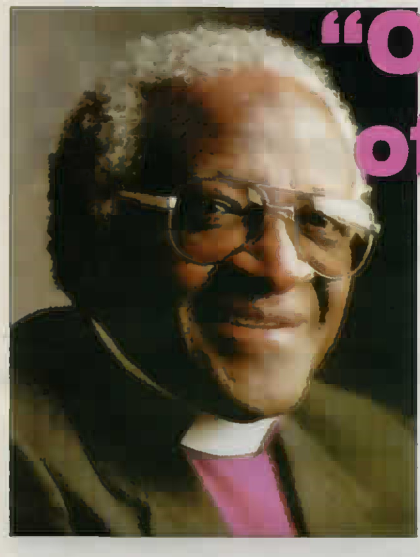


# "Ongoing oppression of the Tamil People"

## *Archbishop Desmond Tutu expresses distress*

In a communication to Mr.Ken Kangeyan of the Media Watch, Tamil Action Group of 40, Hillary Gardens, Stanmore Middlesex HA7 2NQ, England (sent through his Personal Assistant, Lavinia Browne) Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa says:

25 April 1996

"I am distressed at the ongoing oppression of the Tamil people by the government of Sri Lanka. There are too many countries where oppression is the order of the day, where violence has become endemic, the ultimate being the horror of the genocide in Rwanda. Destruction and bloodshed are not the route to prosperity and peace. In South Africa international outrage against unjustice and the will of our people turned our country from oppression to democracy and we are now engaged in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"Our Commission is giving those who suffered under political oppression the opportunity to release their pain. To hear those stories is to cry out, "How could it ever happened?" followed by the convication that it should never happen again. All of us are capable of the most horrendous acts. Let us be sure that we do not get caught up in self-righteous comp;acency. Let us oppose oppression with every fibre of our being and be sure that the world is a better place for our passing through it.

"I pray for a miracle in Sri Lanka and all places of conflict.I pray that warring parties will learn that the only road to peace is to speak to each other as human beings. Every culture is valid and has its own contribution to make to the world. We were created to love, to laugh and to share and care for each other. As human beings by our very nature we are interdependent.

I ask you to support the cause of the Tamil people. They are God's children.

God bless you"

# 100 S.A.Tamils chant: "Murderers go home"

Passengers on the inaugural flight into South Africa of Sri Lanka's national airline were met by about 100 Tamils chanting "murderers go home" as they protested against alleged oppression of Tamils on the Indian Ocean island.

Air Lanka launched its twice-weekly service to South Africa with a flight from Colombo via Durban to Johannesburg.

The protest did not disturb passengers. Air Lanka's South African managerDealwis Saraph said after receiving a letter addressed to the airline.

The letter from the People Against Sri Lankan Oppression's Lenasia branch asked the airline to suspend flights into South Africa until there was peace in Sri Lanka.

The protesters, according to spokesman Pungie Lingham, wanted to draw attention to alleged human rights violations by Sri Lanka's Government, which is fighting a protracted war against Tamil Tiger rebels. - Sapa

# 2800 deported from Britain last year

Nearly 2,800 asylum seekers were deported from Britain in 1995 according to Home Office figures published on May 16. This was an increase of more than 35 percent over 1994.

Despite the sharp increase in enforcement action by the authorities. the backlog of asylum applications awaiting decision rose to 85,000 this March.

The official figures show only 1.300 were recognised as refugees and a further 4.400 given exceptional leave to remain.

# CHECHENIA And SRI LANKA

Geographically, Chechenia and Sri Lanka might be far apart, but what happens in Chechenia offers some interesting parallels to what is happening in Sri Lanka. It also shows that the behaviourial patterns of governments are always the same.

*Boris Yeltsin*

Following is an editorial comment from THE GUARDIAN, London in its issue of March 27, relevant even now despite the cease-fire agreement. The editorial comment is titled: "THE REAL BANDITS IN CHECHENIA: Yeltsin cares only about Russian unity, nothing for the people."

"....The President (Boris Yeltsin) and his advisers have sought to disarm criticism by protesting that the Chechenian situation is a crisis not of their making and that it defies simple solution, Mr.Yeltsin has described everyone else's peace proposals as "extremely abstract". While saying that he must end the war in order to win re-election in June, he dismisses the demands of others to end the war as "irresponsibly radical". Withdrawl of the federal forces, he claims, would leave the civilian population of Chechenia at the mercy of "bandits" who will then indulge in "blatant terrorism" in order to stay in power. THIS IS SELF-DELUSION. WHEN RUSSIAN FORCES POUND CIVILIANS WITH GUNS, ROCKET LAUNCHERS AND HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS, WHO ARE THE REAL BANDITS? A new OSCE report gives details of robbery, looting and arson by Russian soldiers, and the targeting of centres of population without justification. IN EFFECT, LARGE NUMBERS OF THE CHECHEAN POPULATION HAVE BEEN DEEMED HOSTILE BECAUSE GUERILLAS CAN BE FOUND IN THEIR MIDST: THE PARALLELS WITH US BARBARISM AND SELF-DELUSION IN THE VIETNAM WAR BECOME EVEN MORE OBVIOUS.

> **"What is really at stake is the indivisibility of Russia - and Yeltsin's pride..."**

*The new Chechenian leader Yandarbiyev*

"Mr. Yeltsin's alleged concern for the ordinary people of Chechenia is hardly the real issue. He and his officials have made it clear that what is really at stake is the indivisibility of Russia - and his pride.... The federation will not be maintained by force. And in their apparent preference for Boris as the next President, Western governments must not turn a blind eye to the horrors of his war".

## TAMIL-SPEAKING DIASPORA

***How many Tamil-speaking People are there in the world? Here is an estimate of the numbers in 21 Countries outside Sri Lanka:-***

| COUNTRY | POPULATION | COUNTRY | POPULATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| AUSTRALIA | 105,000 | MARTINIQUE | 13,000 |
| BURMA | 200,000 | NEW CALEDONIA & TAHITE | 6,000 |
| CANADA | 125,000 | NORWAY | 2,000 |
| FIJI | 25,000 | SINGAPORE | 148,000 |
| FRANCE | 50,000 | SOUTH AFRICA | 300,000 |
| GERMANY | 51,000 | SWITZERLAND | 38,000 |
| GUADELOP | 21,000 | TRINIDAD | 7,000 |
| GUYANA | 10,000 | U.K. | 0,000 |
| HOLLAND | 10,000 | U.S.A | 6,500 |
| INDIA | 51,439,000 | MAURITIUS | 100,000 |
| MALAYSIA | 1,295,000 | | |

*PRATHABAN (KINGSTON UNI. U.K)*

*Note: Tamils live in several other countries as well, including substantial numbers in Denmark, Italy and Sweden.*

# MSF volunteer resigns in sympathy with the Tamils

*"Ute. U.Bellahn"of Sheffield, UK. sends the following message dated 21 May by E mail:*

On behalf of the ordinary British public, I would just like to say a Big Sorry to all the Tamil people around the world and specially to all the innocent Tamil civilians in the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka. I am saying this, as it's very sad and very frustrating to see how our government has not done anything to ease off the crisis that has been going almost unnoticed for many years.

"Those of you who know various international laws governing charity status realise that when one belongs to a particular charity, he or she is not allowed to take any action or speak out against their own government. Personally, I have lived with this frustration for many years, but then again one cannot force any government into taking action, as western governments these days consider their own interests compared to anything else. So, due to many personal reasons, I have now officially rsigned from being a member of the M.S.F. even though I still have to obey some of their laws. specially since I have previously worked in Rwanda, Somalia and Sri Lanka.

"It is a well-known fact among the Tamils in Ealam as well as many Tamil expatriates that the LTTE's international public relations drive is not well organised compared to the S.L. govt's public relation campaign. I also believe that with certain Tamil groups like TELO,EPRLF, EPDP etc. supporting the government as well as employing a Tamil Foreign Minister , it's hard to convince western powers to do something to bring a lasting solution.

"I don't want to comment too much about the current situation in Sri Lanka or write my own personal views in this network. I consider myself an outsider to the whole issue, plus I don't think I know enough or have experienced anything really bad as what some Tamil refugees have experienced..

"However, what I can say , having seen and spoken with a lot of Tamils in refugee camps, hospitals, LTTE cadres and aid workers who have worked with Tamil people for many years is that :

"There are people on this planet, Earth. who would like this war or crisis (whatever word one would use to describe the situation) to go on for as long as possible as some of these people would not be rich today or cannot continue to become richer if not for this war".

# Questions in Danish Parliament on the plight of Tamil Refugees

The following questions were presented to the Foreign Minister of Denmark by **Seren Sondergaard** Member of Parliament, **Enhedslisten**, (a political party) requesting written answers. The questions were tabled on May 31.

1. What initiatives has the government of Denmark taken to press the Sri Lankan government to remove the obstacles which prevent the reaching of emergency help to the nearly 400,000 refugees who were driven from their homes under the Sri Lankan government's military offensive from November 1995 up to this date?

Reason: The nearly 400,000 refugees are virtually imprisoned in a little area south of Jaffna peninsula and they cannot for example move further south. The Sri Lankan government controls all emergency help with a heavy hand. According to "Enehedslist ' sources, only a fraction of the assistance given by international organisations to ease the situation reach the real refugees. Furtermore, "Enhedslisten" is in the knowledge of persons who work for the local Red Cross being arrested and threatened with imprisonment now, only on suspicion that they intended to take cooking utensils to the refugee camps.

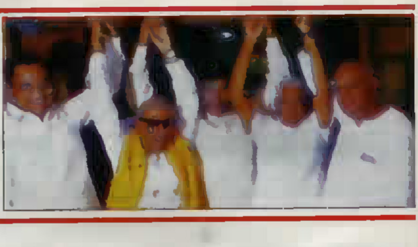
With the nearly 400.000 refugees in a small jungle area in the north of Sri Lanka who suffer under the government's economic embargo and who were able to bring only very little from their homes, there looms a catastrophic situation. Speedy initiatives, especially from the European countries are therefore essential.

2. "Has the Danish government in any form, protested against the Sri Lankan government's massive military offensive against the civilian population from November 1995 up to this date?

Reason: More than anything else, it is political pressure that can ease the situation in Sri Lanka. Many European governments have, in the meantime, chosen to maintain silence because of their economic and politica relationships with the Sinhalese government. Therefore, the assaults on the Tamil people can continue and become further intensive with the absence of loudly voiced international protest. The Sinhalese government therefore goes on with the illusion that it can solve the conflict by military action against the Tamil Tigers. It is the civil population that suffers most by this illusion.

3. What information has the Foreign Minister sent the Refugee Board about the recent developments in Sri Lanka?

## India



# UNSTABLE POLITICS AT THE CENTRE

## *3 Cabinets within 3 weeks!*

India has seen three Cabinets within three weeks, with the Congress (I) under Narasimha Rao yielding power to the 12-day Hindu nationalist government under Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which in turn has stepped down, giving place to a third Front government, an alliance of 14 centrist and leftist parties under H.D.Deve Gowda. The present government is itself a minority government, dependent entirely on the support extended to it by the Congress. Next to the BJP with 160 seats in the Lok Sabha, the Congress (I) has 136, casting the latter in the role of kingmaker. There is intense speculation both within India and outside that the Deve Gowda government's life span could be short - unless both Congress (I) and the National Front-Left Front decide to hang on to each other for fear of permitting a situation where another election in the near future could bring in the BJP Hindu nationalists with a clear majority.

# Deve Gowda - a man of simple tastes

*Kenneth J.Cooper profiles the new Prime Minister for the WASHINGTON POST*

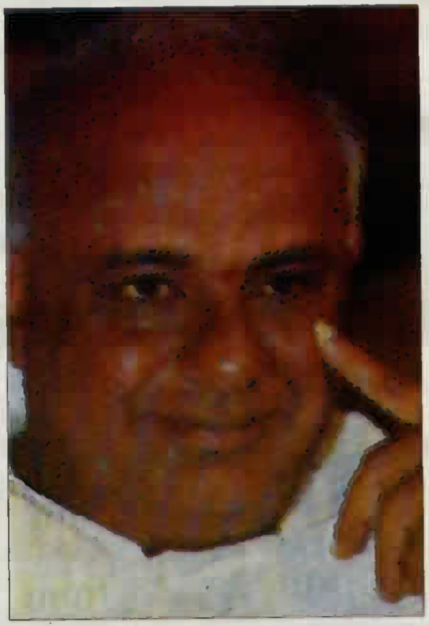
"He grows rice and millet on the family farm. He dines on bland balls of millet paste and curried vegetables. He dresses in a simple garment of unstitched cotton.

H.D.Deve Gowda, the new prime minister of India and leader of the multiparty United Front, is a man of simple tastes who remains close to his rural origins in the southern state of Karnataka. In fact, his first name - Haradanahalli - is that of his ancestral village.

Newspaper and magazine profiles are filled with self-effacing comments in which he describes himself as "just a peasant" who does not "need any luxuries" or "want to mix with sophisticated people," including foreigners.

But it would be a mistake to write off Mr.Gowda, 63, as a naive country boy about to take over the world's largest democracy and get overwhelmed in this capital's rough politics.

He was first elected to his state's legislature more than 30 years ago, jumped in and out of several political parties, served time in prison during Indira Gandhi's state of emergency in the 1970s and rose to be Karnataka's chief minister in 1994 after a couple of near misses.



*Mr: Deve Gowda*

Mr.Gowda served three and a half years in the last Parliament but is not now a member. He must get elected to a seat within six months of taking the oath of office Saturday.

It is true that Mr.Gowda was not the first choice of the 13 leftist and regional parties that make up the new United Front.

He was chosen largely because the front's power brokers are not threatened by his style, his narrow political base and his limited proficiency in English and Hindi; he prefers his native, regional Kannada language. They seem to have forgotten that in India's political history other leaders chosen for similar reasons - from Indira Gandhi to P.V.Narasimha Rao - later developed a tight grip on power.

Mr.Gowda was born into a middle class family in what was then a small village about 100 miles (160 kilometers) west of Bangalore, which has become known outside India for its customized computer software and other high-tech products. He trained as a civil engineer at a government polytechnic institute and briefly ran a contracting business.

**"He is a very, very simple person, has been a vegetarian for a long time. He does not drink or smoke. He wears simple clothes and even went abroad wearing his white lungi and kurta," the skirt-like**

**garment and long shirt typically worn by Indian villagers.**

**Mr.Gowda has made a few trips to Europe, Israel and Singapore but is considered largely untutored on foreign policy issues.**

## *A Tamil now India's Minister of Finance*

Palaniappan Chidambaram, a lawyer by training and who had earlier held ministerial posts as Minister of Commerce and Minister of State for Internal Security in Congress governments, has now become the first Tamil in recent timesto hold the crucial post of Minister of Finance in the Indian government. A product of the Harvard Business School, Chidambaram has been actively involved in the past during the Rajiv Gandhi era in attempts to resolve the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka. Now a leading light in the breakaway Congress along with G.K.Moopanar, he is expected to carry forward the liberalisation programme initiated by his predecessor in office.

## Jayalalitha on Jayalalitha

Totally routed at the elections, the once high and mighty Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha Jayaram gave an exclusive interview recenty to Rasheeda Bhagat of the INDIAN EXPRESS. Here are a few excerpts:

"I am not an arrogant person. In the film industry, in the beginning, people used to think I was arrogant, because I have always been reserved.

I have never been a gregarious, outgoing type. I'm an introvert. I speak when spoken to. I can't be like a man and go and slap somebody on the back and say: "Hi, How are you", and things like that. I don't like socialising. I don't like parties... But fate has thrust me into a phase where you have to constantly undergo public exposure....film industry and later Politics.....

"I am sensible, down-to earth and practical person. I've been criticised all over India for debasing Tamil culture, but it is part of Tamil culture to fall at the feet of elders and those you respect (!) do you think I enjoy and encourage this?...... I keep telling them don't do this, don't do this. what more can I do? I am a Woman. If a man falls at my feet I can't push him away with my hands....."

# The Seeds of Decentralization

*Rev.Fr.Xavier Arulraj*

The "biggest democracy", as it is considered by the world community is on the cross-roads. The verdict of the eleventh Lok-Saba has been a water-shed in the Indian electoral politics. After the death of Rajiv Gandhi, the legendary Nehru family legacy crossing the regional frontiers as the custodians of national integration, has suffered a severe set-back. The Congress party which had sustained itself merely on hero-worship and sycophancy to carry the masses finds itself without a hero and charisma and hence is at the dead-end,

The emergence of parties like Tamil Manila Congress led by Mr.G. K.Moopanar, Tiwari Congress led by Mr.N.D. Tiwari, Madya Pradesh Vikas Manch led by Mr.Madhavrao Scindia, all out of conflicts with Mr.Narashima Rao, demonstrates one singular factor that the structure of the party has lost its gravitational force and is going downhill. The Indian National Congress, at no point of time respected the State Governments and it trampled over the nationalities and their behaviour was always smacking of a Delhi mohul syndrome of sultants. The increasing concentration of power at the centre, the blind refusal to share it with the State Governments, and the form of unitary government it nurtured have led to alienation of the masses and nationalities that are struggling for more freedom and identity.

The victory of state-level parties like Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Tamil Manila Congress in Tamil Nadu, Asom Gana Parishad in Assam, Akali Dal in Punjab, Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra as powerful players in the formation of the central government is indicative of the changes that are on the anvil. These parties represent the regional aspirations and have to naturally defend the rights of the nationalities or the "lingual states" as they are called in India.

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# HC admits plea to release Rajiv Gandhi case accused

Madras, May 22 - The Madras High Court has admitted a habeas corpus petition praying for a direction to the CBI, SIT, Madras, to produce all the 26 accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case before the court and to set them at liberty.

A division bench comprising Justice Abdul Wahab and Justice N.V.Balasubramaniyan admitted the petition on Wednesday and ordered notice to the CBI returnable by the reopening of the vacation court.

Claiming that he was a friend of all the accused, Civil Liberty Union President K.Anandhan in his petition submitted that the accused were in prison situated in the Poonamallee sub-jail since 1991, and their bail applications had been dismissed.

He alleged that the delay in the trial was caused by the prosecution and the presiding officer of the Designated Court-I trying the case.

The judge very often went on long leave on medical grounds. He went for a month's long leave in May 1994 and again in December the same year.

Now he had gone on two months' medical leave from April 29. If the judge went on long leave, the government ought to have made alternative arrangements to proceed with the trial, or else release the detenus on bail till the judge returned.

The accused should not be made to suffer in jail, just because the presiding officer had gone on long leave, petitioner contended and prayed for a direction to release all the 26 accused in the case till the judge returned from leave. The Bench also admitted a similar habeas corpus petition from the mother of Perarivalan, one of the accused in the case.

*Express News Service*

## Comment

# "Defence Ministry" man turns to Fiction Writing!

It happened on 17th May in a government-controlled area in the Jaffna peninsula. Army men in uniform entered a house in Sarasalai, near Chavakachcheri where there were three women to whom they made sexual advances. The women resisted and in the course of the scuffle, the army men lost their temper and stabbed all three of them. The wounded women were rushed to the hospital, where they died, one in the Thevarani hospital and the other two at Manthikai hospital.

The victims were Sri Ranjani (18), Puvaneswary (36) and Rajeswary (38).

The Defence Ministry man, whoever it was (bless his soul!) did some quick thinking and decided to metamorphose fact into fiction. The Ministry issued the following communique on 18th May, which the fiction-loving Colombo newspaper, The Island, gleefully publishefd on Page 1 of its Sunday edition of May 19, under the headline "Terrorists posing as Govt. soldiers stab civilians".

The Island report said:-

"The defence ministry in a communique said yesterday: "On 17th May 1996 around 0800 hrs. a small group of LTTE terrorists dressed in uniforms similar to Sri Lanka Army uniforms had gone to a village at Manthuvil and had demanded the identity cards from a group of civilians. This village is situated about 3 kms away from the Security Forces defences in Thenmarachchi. There are no army personnel present in this area.

"Civilians suspecting that they were not army personnel had refused to surrender their identity cards. The LTTE personnel then had stabbed some of the civilians in anger. The following 3 persons had received serious injuries due to the stabbing and were brought to the Varani Hospital by the civilians in the area - Sri Ranjani (18 yrs), Poneswarie (36 yrs), Rajeshwarie (38 yrs).

"The civilians had informed the security forces authorities and the police of the incident. Thereafter the security forces had evacuated the 3 injured to the Manthikai Hospital in Point Pedro. All three had succumbed to their injuries later in hospital.

"It is very clear that the LTTE had resorted to this type of harassment of civilians in a desperate situation to bring disrepute to the security forces.

"Security forces have made arrangements to assist the families of the deceased to conduct funerals in their village."

But funnily enough, stung by the fear of bad publicity, the state run Rupavahini in Colombo gave a different version. It said what the "terrorists" demanded from the women was not Identity Cards but jewellery. The Army radio station at Palaly went further and said, the LTTE men stabbed to death not only the three women. but even two Sri Lankan soldiers who went to the rescue of the women! Poor, defenceless soldiers indeed!

# Tamil Cricket Festival '96

*The Tamil Eelam shield*

*(From our Cricket correspondent)*

May 27, 1996, marked the dawn of a new chapter m the Tamil Cricket scene in the U.K. Old Students of more than 20 schools in the Tamil homeland joined together in a Cricket and Netball fiesta at the Wadham Lodge Sports Centre in Walthamstow with the West Indian cricket celebrity Sir Garfield Sobers as Chief Guest and in the presence of over 5000 spectators.

Since 1989, an annual Festival of Cricket had been a regular event in London, with six Sri Lankan schools as original participants. In 1990, Jaffna Central was invited into the competition, and in the following year, St.John's, Jaffna was also accommodated. The attempts to expand the Tamil representation was resisted by the Sri Lankans who said that there would be only 12 permanent members, inclusive of the two Jaffna schools entitled to vote. As in politics. the idea was to keep the Tamils as a minority of 2 against 10. Jaffna Hindu with an abundantly talented team entered the competition in 1992 and went straight into the semi-finals. and deserved to be "seeded"as per tradition , but instead, to quote the Jaffna Hindu President, "treated as a second class member of the association "

While the association was being dominated by the Sri Lankan schools, the cricket itself was being dominated by the Tamil schools. Jaffna Central remained unbeaten for four consecutive years from 1990 to 1993 and then

Champions - Jaffna Hindu

St.Johns, Jaffna became the champions in 1995. In 1996, eight Tamil schools were to participate, but only two had any say in the affairs.

The Festival of Cricket (FOC) body imposed a compulsory charity ticket sale, each school being asked to sell £200 worth tickets or pay a fine of £200, plus the entry fee of £300 per school. Over the years, the charity coffers had swollen to £17,000 What was happening to the money? It was becoming evident that the charity money was being siphoned on to questionable places. like the"National Defence Fund" and Sri Lankan government propaganda against Tamils. When it was requested that some part of the charity money be given to the internal Tamil refugees who were victims of the war, it brought out the ugly chauvinist mind of those who were managing the show. Offensive comments were made such as "Ask them to write to us from the refugee camps", "Tell your Tamil chaps to come out of the jungles", Okay, we will build them a toilet", and so on. That was the last straw that made all self-respecting Tamil schools to pull out of the FOC body - **with the one solitary exception, Skanda Varodaya** - and organise their own cricket festival. 1996 therefore marked the new beginning.

No monkey tricks here

Tamil Eelam team and County & England and West Indies stars

The schools that rallied round to express Tamil solidarity were: Jaffna Central, Chithambara, Chundikuli, Hartley, Jaffna Hindu, Jaffna College, Kokuvil Hindu, Mahajana, Manipay Hindu, Methodist Central, Nelliyady MMV, Shivananda, Stanley, St.Henry's. St.Johns St.Patricks, Trinco Hindu. Union, Urumpirai Hindu, Vaddukkoddai Hindu and Victoria, encompassing the entire Tamil homeland of northeast under the banner of the United Tamils Organisation.

The festival was a grand success, with Chundikuli Girls emerging champions in the Netball tournament, with Vembadi Girls coming second. In the Cricket final, Jaffna Central and Jaffna Hindu clashed with the latter winning the trophy. Sir Garfield Sobers presented the trophies and prizes to all the winners.

Vijayanathan of Jaffna Central was declared the Man of the Tournament, the best bowler was Raviraj of Jaffna Central, the best batsman Pirabaharan of Jaffna Hindu and P.Pirabanathan of Jaffna Hindu was adjudged the Man of the Match.

Practising for the Net ball matches

Autograph hunters with Sir Garfield Sobers

The best Marquee contest was judged by West Indian wicket keeper Derek Murray, and Urumpirai Hindu carried off the prize.

Another highlight of the festival was the seven-a-side exhibition match between a British County team and the Tamil Eelam side.

The County players were Chris Sutton, Derek Randall, Derrick Murray, Philip be Freitas (England/Derbyshire), Russ Taylor, Steve Dock and Ian Pearce. The Tamil Eelam side was composed of Shanthikumar (Canada), Naguleshwaran (New Zealand), Jeyenthitan (USA), Dr.M.Theivendra (UK), and Roy Selvarajah, Suben Senthilvel and Vijayakumar all of UK.The match was won by the Counties team.

# THE OLYMPICS & Jaffna high jumper

Beginning next month, on July 19, the 26th Olympic Games gets off to a strart at Atlanta, U.S.A. 11.000 athletes from a record 197 countries are to take part in the games lasting over 17 days.

Two million spectators will view the games in person, and an estimated 3 million or more via television.

The Olympics held every four years, is a century old this year, with the first modern games held in Athens. Greece, in 1896.

Has any Tamil competed in the Olympics ever? Yes. One did representing Ceylon - in the Rome Olympics of 1960. And from Jaffna too. He was Ethirveerasingham, the elegantly tall High jumper from Jaffna Central College. Ethir failed to get a medal, but fared creditably anyway.

Curiously, he earned a reference in PUNCH. the prestigious magazine of British humour. which unfortunately ceased publication a few years back. The PUNCH writer wrote a preview of the Rome Olympics - not about the Games - but about the names of competitors from around the world, long names, unpronounceable names. funny-sounding ones. The writer said: NOW TAKE THIS HIGH JUMPER FROM CEYLON. HIS NAME IS NAGALINGAM ETHIRVEERASINGHAM. SPELL HIS NAME VERTICALLY, AND HE WILL STILL JUMP IT!

100

Atlanta 1996

# "BRENT NORTH TAMILS WILL BACK THE LABOUR CANDIDATE"

A packed meeting of Brent-North Tamils of Sri Lankan origin has pledeged to campaign for a 'block Tamil vote' in support of the prospective Labour Barry Gardener in the coming general election. An enthusiastic audience gave a standing ovation to Mr. Gardener's moving speech in which he emphasised the British government's ineluctable obligation to mediate in the ongoing national conflict in Sri Lanka which has caused over 50,000 deaths and condemned over half a million Tamils to live as refugees.

He was responding to a comment by the Chairman of the Association of Tamils in Brent, Mr. Paramalingam, that the British as former colonialists of the island should also be accountable for the tragic war in the country, "as it was they who imposed an artificial state structure which is the root cause for the conflict".

Mr.Gardener blamed the Tory government for not including the Sri Lankan national conflict as one of its major foreign policy concerns and said that current British immigration policy was responsible for "enormous injustices to legitimate Tamil asylum seekers from Sri Lanka".

"A future Labour government would offer to mediate between the Tamil leadership (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and the government in Colombo", Mr.Gardener promised, "and do everything it can to help the opposing sides achieve a political solution to the conflict".

# Tamil Protests in Washington

U.S. based Eelam Tamils in large numbers staged hunger strikes at Lafayette Park in front of the White House on May 15-17 and took out a protest demonstration on May 17, to sensitize U.S. to the persecution of Tamils by the Sri Lankan government.

Video tapes showing the staggering pain and loss of Civilian lives when the Sri Lankan Air Force bombed the church in Navaly, and showing the mass exodus of Tamils escaping the impending military ocupation of Jaffna, and the bombing raids of the Sri Lankan Air Force even while the Civilians were making the arduous trip to the Vanni, were all distributed.

The tapes were also played live at the rally.

A counter protest by some Sri Lankans also took place - See picture on bottom right.

TAMILEELAM TAMILS
ON HUNGER STRIKE

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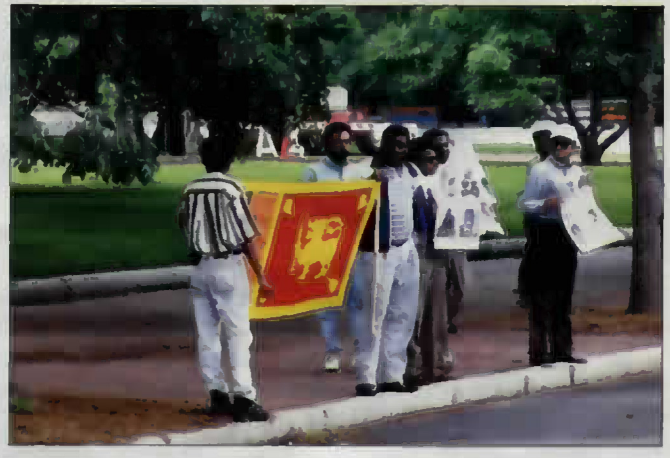


# CHILD POEMS

## DOES IT MATTER ?

Every day children and grown-ups die
from hunger and thirst
Does it matter ?
We say while we vomit
to stay then.

Every day, people are shot and
killed in war
Does it matter?
We say while shooting each other
with our toy guns.

Every day animals are killed
for science.
Does it matter ?
We say as we smear lipstick
on our mouths to look beautiful.

Every day the ozone layer
gets thinner
Does it matter ?
We say while spraying ourselves
with deodorant and perfume.

Every day trees are
chopped down in the rain forest
Does it matter ?
We say while tossing out the paper
we just used.

Every day there are children
unable to get an education.
Does it matter ?
We say while claiming to have sore throat
in order to skip school.

Every day there seems to be
a little less of this world.
Does it matter ?

*- Benedicte Fikseauner, age 14, Norway.*

One child dies,
Your world has ceased to turn.
Ten children die,
The television has broadcast it.
A thousand children die,
We're getting used to it.

*- Silvio, age 13, France.*

*From an anthology titled "A WORLD IN OUR HANDS" written, illustrated by young People of the world in honour of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, with a foreword by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary General of the United Nations*

# For your Diary

## June 14,15,16:

Public lectures on the Yoga of Devotion (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter XII) by Sri. A.Parthasarathy. exponent of Vedanta philosophy, at Harrow Teachers Centre, Tudor Road, Harrow, Middx June 14: 7.30 p.m.; June 15:5.30 p.m. June 16:3.30 Admission free.

## July 4 Thursday:

An EVErywoman EVEnt. Book launch of UNBROKEN CHAINS by Adele Ann about the Caste and Dowry system in N.E Lanka6- 8 p.m.at the Lancaster Suite. Park Court Hotel, 75, Lancaster Gate, London W2 3 NN. Wine and cheese and traditional Sri Lankan snacks.

## July 13 Saturday:

Memorial Service for the 120 innocent Tamil victims of the bombing of St.Peter and St. Paul's Church Navaly, Jaffna on July 9, 1995. Song, Prayer, Dance and Liturgy at St.Martin's in the Fields, Trafalgar Square 11.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. For further information: Miss Mann 0171- 252 1274 or Ms.McConnell, 0161- 860 4609.

## July 15-17:

Mata Amritananda, the Saint from Kerala, gives Satsang and Darshan at Battersea Town Hall. Contact Mik and Ray Sofroniou, 6, Avon Avenue, Middle Tysoe, Warwickshire CV35 OSP or Tel: Renuka Sadanandan 01411 282367.

## July 17-20:

The DALAI LAMA gives talks on the Four Noble Truths at the Barbican. For details Tel: 0171 383 7533 (Tibet Society) or 0171 638 8891 (Barbican). Also there is a talk in Manchester on 19 July.

## July 27, Saturday:

"Neengatha Ninaivuhal" (Unforgettable Memories), a day of Cultural, and Educational Activities and Remembrance at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square WC1, UK,organised by VENPURA, Tamil Women's Network.

10.00 a.m. - 6 p.m.: Stalls, information activities including garland making,traditional floor pattern designing, story-telling for children, food preparing demonstrations, Try on a Sari, maps and displays on the history, geography and current situation on the island. PLUS delicious Tamil food at reasonable prices. A participatory day! Something for everyone to enjoy and learn. Have a guided tour of Tamil Life.

Afternoon 2 p.m.- 5 p.m.: Workshops and discussion on issues of interest and concern: women, health , human rights, Aid and Arms, exact details nearer the time.

Evening 7 p.m.-10 p.m.: Music, Dance and Villuppattu (traditional music/drama narrated story, Veena music (traditional South Asian stringed instrument) and more.

For more information and group bookings, please phone VENPURA 0181 - 646 3135.

*Human Chain protest against Sri Lankan government oppression of Tamils: On left, Bangalore, Karnataka - India, and on right in the Vanni Tamil mainland*

## MARRIED

Branavan, son of Mr & Mrs.Viyakesparan of 787B Kenton Lane, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 6AH to Ramanthi, daughter of Mr & Mrs. Pathmanathan of 14, Grafton Close, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7JY on Monday 27th of May, at Runnymede Suite, Kempton Park, Staines Road East, Sunbury On Thames, Middlesex.

* * * * *

General Anuruddha Ratwatte (58), Sri Lanka's War Minister and Minister of Power and Energy to Ramani Imbuldeniya, described by a Colombo newspaper as his "childhood sweetheart" in Kandy on 30 May. Ramani Iambuldeniya was married earlier to President's Counsel Kanag-Iswaran, son of one-time Senator S.R. Kanaganayagam.

# OBITUARIES

## *Appreciations*

## Miss Muriel Hutchins

Fluency of language, devotion to work, tenacity of purpose, a sense of humour and an abiding love of people are the qualities that endeared Miss. Hutchins to the people of Jaffna. Moving about on her bicycle she became a part of Jaffna's landscape. One saw her and her bicycle almost everywhere, church services, weddings, funerals, market, at homes of students and parents. For 27 years she worked as a teacher and administrator demonstrating constantly her love and her faith touching the lives of hundreds of children.

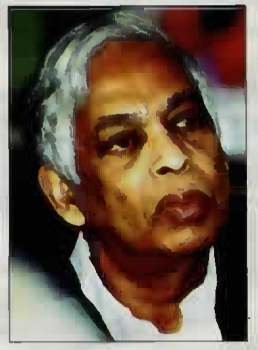
When she retired in 1955, instead of returning to Wales she remained in Jaffna. When asked if she was returning, she with her characteristic humour said, "I would be out of place, a stranger with strange customs who would suddenly break out in Tamil". With her small pension and 16 children from Kilinochchi and the surrounding villages she started "Karunaniliyama' orphanage.

Over the years, the orphanage grew steadily. It has a chapel, a workshop, a weaving centre, a hostel, a farm and playground with electricity and pipe borne water. With over 150 children and more wanting to come, it haad come to occupy an important place in Kilinochchi. Hutchins remained in the orphanage spending her entire life to the care of the children. 'It was a lovely place' she once wrote, 'We used to go from house to house singing songs and sometimes we would hold services on the bund of the Iranamadu Tank'. She was loved by the children and loved by the people of Kilinochi who affectionately referred to her as 'Amma'. However, life at the orphanage was never easy, particularly since 1985 when Kilinochchi came to be in the heart of the war zone in the North. 'The war has meant hard times for everyone including the orphanage', she complained. 'Quite often, because of fighting and bombing the children had to hide in the surrounding jungles. Yet, I got along very well with the Tamils and the Sinhalese. Sometimes, I even talk to the Tamil Tigers', she said.

Understandably all these physical strains must have had their effect on her. Aged and physically worn, she says, 'Sometimes, I pray to God to take me away to His world. But He says, wait a while, wait a while. So that is what I am doing now. I have no regrets'. Confined to a wheal chair and with restricted movement, she continued to devote her services to the orphanage. Though physically ill, she was mentally alert till she became briefly ill and passed away in the early hours of 5th March, 1996. When the news broke the next morning, the entire Kilinochchi mourned the passing away of this 'Amma'. At the funeral service the town folk paid their tribute to her life Rev.Isaac Selvaratnam and Mrs.A.C. Thambirajah. Her mortal remains were gently borne in a procession two miles long and cremated according to her wishes. Later her ashes were cast into the Iranamadu Tank whose waters transform the parched lands into flourishing paddies sustaining life.

*R.S.Thambiah, Retired Librarian,*
*University of Jaffna*

## Dr.K. Sivaloganathan



It is with a deep sense of sorrow and grief that I write these lines in memory of our friend Siva, whom I have known for 40 years. .

He obtained an honours degree from the University of London, and was offered a scholarship to the UK for higher studies, which he turned down to remain in Sri Lanka.When I was working on a water supply project in Colombo, my senior colleagues always spoke highly of Siva's skills when he was the Resident Engineer. Anyone who sought his advice could be sure of getting a solution put across in a most polite manner, with no criticism had their approach been wrong.

While at the University of Coventry, he carried out research in hydraulic flow computations and flood routing. He published many papers on the subject in Europe and in the USA. He also served in Nigeria, both as a Water Engineer and as a teacher.

About 14 years ago he had symptoms of angina which he overcame through careful diet and exercise. When on 15th April, he passed away, he was engaged in a game of badminton. But it was a painles end. His loss will be deeply felt not only by his family and friends but also by the Civil Engineering profession, particularly in the field of hydraulics.

*N.Vamadevan*

## S. R. Thevathasan

*Extracts from a Funeral Address by Rev.David M.Chapman on 24 April.*

Samuel Rajakumar Thevathasan was born on 4 February 1941 in Colombo, and died in St.George's hospital in South-West London on 15 April 1996, at the age of fifty-five. Behind these bare details, however, is a story of a life which made a long journey in more senses than one. Along the way, he met with happiness and sadness, and made many friends. To meet Sam was to know him as a good and gentle man. His friends knew him also to have tremendous strength of character and patience in adversity. Above all, Sam's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour was strong and vibrant; and it shone out like a beacon.

Sam's early days in Sri Lanka were marked by an academic potential which saw him through Wesley College in Colombo, Jaffna College and thence to Aquinas University, taking in various scholarships on the way. In recent years, he was proud to be President of the Wesley College Old Boys' Association. On arriving in London in 1975 Sam took a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education at Southlands College after which he lectured in Hammersmith before becoming Senior Lecturer in Economics and Business Studies at South Thames College. Sam was particularly proud to have received the Queen's Commemoration for his services as an examiner to the University of Carlburough of London.

Sam is survived by his wife Jaya and an only son Dr. Lionel Thevathasan, a sisiter Shanti Manikkawasagam and brothers Ananda and Jeeva.

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**LEGAL AID CASES UNDERTAKEN**

A little Tamil girl autograph - hunting at the London Cricket Festival

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